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ABSTRACT

Studied concerning the methods of establishing equivalences between degrees and diplomas in six countries; Czechoslovakia, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom, and the United States are reviewed. An appraisal of the methods of establishing equivalences between degrees and diplomas for academic purposes for each of the six countries is included. (MJM)

ED 080036

Studies on international equivalences of degrees

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Methods of establishing between degrees and diplomas

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Studies on international equivalences of degrees

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Methods of establishing equivalences between degrees and diplomas

Prepared by the International Association of Universities

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The series entitled Studies on International Equivalences of Degrees *is published by Unesco in implementation of resolution 1.252 (b), adopted by the General Conference at its thirteenth session, which authorizes the Director-General to promote international co-operation for the development of higher education with a view to accelerating the social and economic progress of Member States, by undertaking studies and inquiries on the comparability and equivalence of secondary-school certificates and university diplomas and degrees.*

The main purpose of the series is to provide documentation which will facilitate exchanges of students or graduates who take courses or carry out research in other institutions of higher education, either in their own countries or abroad.

The various contributions published in this series will serve one of the following three purposes:

1. *Gathering, standardizing and disseminating precise information which can be used as a basis for comparison of the different curricula, with due regard to the detailed contents of each, and subsequently for the preparation of synoptical tables which will facilitate the establishment of equivalences.*
2. *Acquainting the reader with the legal texts relating to equivalences and with the methods and practices followed by the national or international bodies responsible for establishing equivalences.*
3. *Providing the essential information regarding the various certificates, diplomas and degrees, in order to give the reader a better understanding of their nature, to reveal the features they have in common in different institutions in the same country or in different countries and to build up a standard vocabulary in this field. This will help to advance the theoretical study of the problem and, in the long run, to affect policy regarding courses and curricula, the equivalences between certificates, diplomas and degrees being taken into account.*

The designations used in the contributions which make up this series must not, of course, be taken as expressing the views of Unesco on the legal status or political system of any country or territory, or on the position of its frontiers. Moreover, Unesco is not committed in any way by the authors' views, the facts stated or the opinions expressed with regard to those facts, or by the general presentation and tone of each contribution.

Preface

This study has been prepared by the International Association of Universities at the request of Unesco, which has helped to provide the necessary funds. It brings together the results of an investigation into the methods and practices followed in six countries, Czechoslovakia, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, with a view to establishing, for academic purposes, the equivalences of foreign diplomas and degrees. These countries were chosen, first, because of the very large number of foreign students they receive, particularly students from the developing countries, and secondly because the procedures they have adopted for the recognition of equivalences are of either direct or indirect interest to the persons responsible in other countries for establishing or interpreting the rules and practices applicable in this field.

Comparative studies on the methods used by other national or international bodies in the same field are to be published at a later date in the same series with a view to facilitating standardization of the practices followed.

It is evident that the major changes taking place in the structure of higher education may result in a slight gap between present practices and certain facts contained in this study. Nevertheless, since the information on the legal problems and the practical arrangements for the recognition of equivalences remains in general unaffected, it has been considered useful to publish this study for which much of the material was gathered in 1966 (1968 in the case of France).

The Introduction, 'Problems in the Mutual Recognition of Degrees and Diplomas', has been prepared by the secretariat of the International Association of Universities.

The study itself consists of the following two parts:

Part I. 'Methods of Establishing Equivalences. Studies from Six Countries.'

The six national studies were prepared, respectively, by: Dr. Otakar Plundr, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Law of Charles University, Prague, and Member of the Presidium of the State Commission on University Degrees, for Czechoslovakia; Mr. Henri Rachou, Head of the University Courses and Staff Department of the Directorate of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, for France; Dr. J. Fischer, Secretary-General of the West German Rectors' Conference, and Miss Anne-Marie von

Bodecker, Member of the conference secretariat, for the Federal Republic of Germany; Professor E. M. Sergeev, Pro-Rector of the Moscow State University, for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; Mr. A. A. Bath, Secretary of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the United Kingdom, for the United Kingdom; and Mr. W. H. Strain, Associate Registrar for Admissions, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind., for the United States.

Part II. 'An Appraisal of the Methods of Establishing Equivalences between Degrees and Diplomas for Academic Purposes.' A comparative appraisal of methods and practices in the six countries investigated, by Dr. C. A. Bodelsen, formerly Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Copenhagen.

Unesco would like to express its appreciation to the International Association of Universities as well as to all those who co-operated to make this work possible.

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Introduction: problems in the mutual recognition of degrees and diplomas

Prepared by the secretariat of the
International Association of Universities

It is only comparatively recently that the question of the recognition of qualifications awarded by a university in one country by academic authorities in another has come to constitute a problem. In the Middle Ages, the free movement of students and scholars from one European university to another was one of the characteristic features of academic life. This, of course, was facilitated by the common use of Latin as the language of scholarship and by the fact that at that time the universities, despite tensions and rivalries between them, formed a closely knit community. This community was essentially European in character, but was none the less open to the learning of ancient schools in the countries of the East.

Even before the emergence of nation States the role of the universities had begun to change, and though they never abandoned their basic characteristics they gradually developed their own national identities and used their national language instead of Latin as their principal medium of instruction.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, this more direct, and in many ways welcome, identification of universities with their national situations had led to considerable diversity and consequently to some weakening of the links between them, particularly where they had come to be separated by language differences. But it was at this time also that the frontiers of knowledge began to be extended with new and increasing momentum: scholars everywhere found that ready access to the work of colleagues in other countries was becoming more necessary than ever before and young men and women were given fresh impetus to seek knowledge and experience beyond the frontiers of their own countries. One consequence was that the need to assess and establish the standing of foreign academic qualifications became acute and by the end of the century a number of agreements on the equivalence of academic qualifications had been concluded. It is of particular interest to note that many of these were between the then newly independent countries of Latin America. A convention signed between Ecuador and Venezuela in 1894, for example, states that 'Legally recognized courses of study duly completed in the colleges and universities of Ecuador shall be valid in Venezuela, and similar studies carried out in Venezuela shall be valid in Ecuador, without students who move from one Republic to the other being required to do more than prove their identity and the authenticity of the relevant documents'. The number of agreements grew steadily during the first part of the present century and the *Collection of Agreements Concerning*

the Equivalence of University Qualifications, published by the International Association of Universities (IAU), includes forty-eight concluded before 1945.

The unprecedented development of international exchanges of all kinds which followed the Second World War led to the signing of a large number of new agreements for the mutual recognition of degrees and diplomas, and the IAU *Collection* includes the texts of 138 which were concluded between 1945 and 1960. Though many of them deal only with equivalences in very general terms, the importance of the progress made in recent years is significant and should not be overlooked in concern about the problems still awaiting solution.

One of the characteristics of this post-war development has been the emphasis placed by the United Nations and its Agencies and by many other international and regional bodies on multilateral co-operation. Most agreements on the equivalence of academic qualifications, however, are bilateral. This is not because there has been no desire to resolve equivalence problems in a wider international setting. The matter has been taken up by many different governmental and academic bodies, both in general terms and in relation to the recognition of qualifications in particular fields of study. The IAU itself has been actively concerned with the equivalence problem since its foundation, and indeed one of the daily tasks of its research and information service is to answer inquiries from governments and universities about the recognition of foreign degrees.

Among the major international contributions towards multilateral collaboration special mention should be made of the work carried out by the Council of Europe with its convention on the equivalence of diplomas leading to university admission, which was followed by conventions dealing with the equivalence of periods of university study, and the academic recognition of university qualifications. Less-known, but setting an important precedent, is the provision of the Euratom treaty stipulating that the six signatory countries 'shall abolish all restrictions based on nationality which have been placed on access by members of any of the member states to specialized employment in the nuclear field'. Mention should also be made of the large number of agreements on the recognition or revalidation of degrees subscribed to by Latin American countries. Although most of these are bilateral, their number creates a network which is in fact multilateral in character.

It should be noted that nearly all agreements on equivalences are inter-governmental. Very few formal agreements have been negotiated directly between universities, but this may generally be attributed to the fact that, with the notable exceptions of the United States of America and of countries of the British Commonwealth, universities in most countries are either directly responsible to a ministry or are required to observe criteria established by the governments of their countries in the matter of academic qualifications.

Two types of problem arise in any attempt to 'equate' degrees awarded in different countries. The first is constituted by the existence of differences

such as those in curricular content, in the duration of studies, in the levels at which examinations are taken, and in academic terminology—including the fact that the meaning of the same or similar terms can vary considerably from one country to another. These make it difficult and very often impossible to establish valid comparisons without resorting to a number of informed but quite arbitrary judgements. The second kind of problem arises in this area of judgement, for the degree-awarding authorities in all countries—be they independent universities or government universities conferring State qualifications—are traditionally sceptical of the competence of any outside body or person to assess the standing of their own degrees, though they themselves are usually quite ready to decide whether or not a foreign qualification is as good as their own.

The task of establishing equivalences even on a bilateral basis can therefore be both complex and delicate, and the magnitude of the problems encountered tends to increase in geometric progression with the number of countries involved in a multilateral enterprise. It is not therefore surprising that the arduous work of the drafters of agreements such as the Council of Europe conventions led to the establishment of texts which do little more than provide in a common undertaking for practices and customs which had already been in use bilaterally between most of the countries and universities concerned. Despite this, their importance and potential value should not be underestimated.

It is useful, moreover, to distinguish between two quite distinct ways of approaching the equivalence problem. One is to make a thorough scholarly assessment of the requirements of universities for the award of degrees and diplomas in each particular field of study. This method, which has been used most recently by the responsible bodies working jointly in France and the Federal Republic of Germany, leads to a large number of separate decisions on equivalences reached only after a painstaking examination in each case of the depth and breadth of curricular content, examination standards and other relevant factors. Equivalences established in this way are obviously the most likely to be accepted with full confidence by all concerned. However, they have the disadvantage of requiring a series of long negotiations which must be reopened whenever changes are made which affect curricular content or examination requirements and standards. They may even be seen as a factor which could hamper curricular reform and experimentation, particularly in situations in which they would entail renegotiation of a complex network of agreements.

The other approach leads to a more general type of agreement: one which asserts that qualifications that are acceptable for particular purposes in the university or country awarding them shall also be acceptable for similar purposes in other countries and universities. Thus, eligibility to enter on a course leading to a first degree or to prepare for a doctorate in one country or university would be transferable to all others covered by the agreement. This is an act of faith rather than a scholarly assessment—if a man is considered good enough in his own country he will be given the same status

in another, regardless of whether the precise content of his studies and the exact level of his qualifications are 'equivalent'. This method has the advantage of being much simpler to apply—calling only for a general assessment of over-all university standards—and it has the merit of creating a useful framework for promoting international co-operation by facilitating the movement of students and scholars from one country to another for academic purposes. It has the disadvantage, however, of expecting academic authorities to waive part of their 'sovereignty' by agreeing to regard certain foreign qualifications as being equivalent to their own, even where on strict examination this might not be the case. The implication is that they give the candidate the benefit of the doubt, and its corollary is that they take the risk of admitting some applicants who may prove to be under-qualified.

An attempt to apply the first method multilaterally in any situation involving an appreciable number of countries and a diversity of university systems would involve serious complications; it is doubtful whether it would be successful in practice. The second approach would appear to offer a more promising basis for seeking a broad measure of international agreement. The use of the thorough scholarly assessment is, however, of great value in working toward international agreement on minimum criteria for basic qualifications in certain key fields of study—notably the natural sciences and technology. In some of them efforts are already being made to draw up model curricula and to work for their acceptance by academic authorities throughout the world.

With few exceptions, however, an agreement on equivalences can at best only serve to establish the eligibility of the holder of a foreign qualification to pursue his studies; but it does not confer on him the right to do so. Thus a decision on whether or not to admit must be taken in each individual case—usually by or on the recommendation of deans of faculties or heads of departments. These decisions are obviously of crucial importance when the number of applicants eligible for admission to a course is greater than the number that the faculty or department is able to accept.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the majority of decisions on the equivalence of academic qualifications are still taken unilaterally by the authorities directly concerned, and not under the terms of a bilateral or multilateral agreement. Many countries and universities have built up a valuable fund of experience and they find that this constitutes a useful guide to the assessment of foreign degrees and diplomas. Their criteria, however, are often marked by a tendency to generalize or over-simplify; with the great complexity of degrees and diplomas and the widely differing connotations which may be given by different universities to the same terms this is almost inevitable, and occasionally a foreign qualification may inadvertently be quite wrongly assessed. In this context, it may be noted that negotiations to draw up bilateral or multilateral agreements, even if they have not always led to immediate positive results, have undoubtedly helped to reveal to each of the participants points on which their respective unilateral practices have involved such errors of judgement.

One practical way of improving the quality and effectiveness of methods used to establish equivalences of degrees and diplomas would be to arrange for regular meetings between those actually engaged in the assessment of foreign qualifications in different countries. This would involve participation from universities and government departments; it might or might not lead to codification in the form of an international agreement, but it could certainly contribute to the solution of some equivalence problems and help to dispel some current misunderstandings about the standing of degrees awarded in different countries.

Part I

Methods of establishing equivalences

Studies from six countries

Czechoslovakia

by Otakar Plundr

Introduction

The method by which equivalences are established between Czechoslovak university qualifications and those of other countries will be easier to follow if something is said first about the various types of qualification conferred by institutions of higher education in Czechoslovakia itself. This introduction is therefore devoted to an account of the Czechoslovak degree system, while the remaining parts of the study contain the report proper. This plan has entailed a certain amount of repetition since Czechoslovak practice in the matter of equivalences is governed by the same rules irrespective of whether the qualifications in question have been obtained in Czechoslovakia or abroad.

The reader's attention is drawn to the fact that all educational establishments in Czechoslovakia are owned and financed by the State.

The rules governing the qualifications which are awarded to a student who has completed his higher education (*absolvent*) apply uniformly to all universities and other institutions of higher education (e.g. technical institutes and schools of economics or art) throughout Czechoslovakia, in conformity with Law No. 19/1966, which came into force on 1 May 1966.

Paragraphs 14 and 15 of this law list the following qualifications:

1. Medical. Doctor of medicine (*doktor medicíny—M.U.Dr.*).
2. Technical, economic and agricultural (excluding veterinary). Engineer (*inženýr*) or engineer/architect (*inženýr architekt*) (*Ing.* and *Ing. Arch.* respectively).
3. Veterinary. Doctor of veterinary science (*doktor veterinařství—M.V.Dr.*).
4. Fine arts (painting, sculpture or architecture). Certificated painter (*akademický malíř*), certificated sculptor (*akademický sochař*) or certificated architect (*akademický architekt*).

Students completing their university or art-school studies in subjects other than medicine, painting, sculpture and architecture undergo an examination, conducted by one of the faculties listed in the regulations governing such examinations, in general subjects and in the field in which they have elected to specialize. If they are successful in this examination, which is known as the *examen rigorosum* or *rigorosní zkouška*, they receive one of the following degrees: doctor of laws (*doktor práv*), doctor of natural science (*doktor*

přírodovědy) or doctor of philosophy (*doktor filosofie*) (J.U.Dr., R.N.Dr. and Ph.Dr. respectively).

All students graduating from an institution of higher education receive a diploma specifying the subject in which they have qualified. Students in the categories referred to in 1 to 4 above receive a diploma specifying their qualifications. Those who have completed the course at an institution of higher education and passed the *examen rigorosum* receive a diploma specifying their degree and the subject in which they obtained it.

Paragraphs 14 and 15 of the law relating to institutions of higher education divide students leaving universities or comparable institutions into two categories:

1. Medical students, on whom the degree of doctor of medicine is conferred immediately upon successful completion of their studies.
2. Students in other faculties and university-level establishments (faculties of law, science, philosophy, education, physical education and sports, mathematics and physics, pharmacy, journalism; University of 17 November, Prague, and the Political College of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, also at Prague). Upon completion of their studies, these students receive a diploma specifying the subject in which they have obtained their qualifications: in order, however, to proceed to the degree of doctor, they must undergo the *examen rigorosum*.

The conduct of the *examen rigorosum*, the subjects to be tested are laid down in the 1966 regulations issued in application of Law No. 19/1966.

None of the four doctorates referred to above (medicine, law, natural science, philosophy) is regarded as a higher degree. Moreover, a student completing a course at a technical, economic, agricultural or art college qualifies as engineer, engineer architect, certificated painter, certificated sculptor or certificated architect and can no longer be awarded a doctorate. The purpose of this provision is to ensure that each type of higher educational establishment can award only one type of final qualification (*absolventský titul*).

Access to higher degrees is regulated by the Law of 2 February 1964 (No. 53/1964) on the Conferment of Higher Degrees and the State Commission for Higher Degrees, and by two orders issued in application of that law: (a) the order of the State Commission for Higher Degrees (SKVH) dated 11 November 1964 (No. 198/1964) on the procedure governing access to higher degrees; (b) the order issued by the President of the Academy of Sciences and the Minister of Education dated 11 November 1964 (No. 199/1964), relating to the training of research workers, and known as the '*aspirantura*' regulations (*aspirantský řád*).

Under Order No. 199/1964, the majority of research workers receive their training under one of the two following systems: (a) regular scientific post-graduate studies (*řádná vědecká aspirantura*), which normally consists of a grant-aided three-year course; (b) external scientific post-graduate studies intended for workers who wish to pursue their studies while remaining in employment.

The scientific side of these courses is run by members of the Academy of Sciences, doctors of science, professors and lecturers, directors of research and independent research workers.

Research workers can also receive their training by participating in the activities of research organizations or in scientific teamwork.

There are two levels of higher degree in Czechoslovakia: candidate of science (*kandidát věd*), the lower of the two, and doctor of science (*doktor věd*), the higher.

The subject in which the degree has been obtained is also specified: e.g. doctor of medical science (*doktor lékařských věd*), candidate of legal science (*kandidát právních věd*), etc.

The abbreviations C.Sc. (*candidatus scientiarum*) and Dr.Sc. (*doctor scientiarum*) are also used for the lower and higher degrees respectively.

The degree of *kandidát* of science attests its holder's aptitude for individual scholarly or scientific work which he may have demonstrated by solving a specific problem or by carrying out research work revealing a mastery of scientific method, considerable theoretical knowledge and the ability to shed new light on a given problem. The degree is obtained by examination and the submission of a thesis which must be defended in public. Persons of exceptional ability, who have discovered a practical application for their research, given objective proof of their high scientific or scholarly qualifications and demonstrated, in serious discussion, the value of their work for society as a whole, may obtain this degree without written examination.

The degree of doctor of science indicates that its holder possesses very high scholarly or scientific qualifications, confirmed by original work, valuable either for its bearing on research or because of its practical applications and revealing a genuine originality of approach. A thesis must be submitted in order to obtain this degree.

Only graduates may apply for either of the above-mentioned degrees; a person wishing to submit a doctoral thesis must already be a *kandidát* of science, a member of the Academy of Sciences, a university lecturer or the holder of a senior research appointment.

Both degrees are conferred either by the appropriate organs of the various institutions of higher education or by the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences or the Slovak Academy of Sciences (CAS and SAS).

The degree of doctor of science is conferred by the research council of a university or other institution of higher education or by the presidium of the CAS or SAS; the degree of *kandidát* of science is conferred by the same bodies, and also by the research council of a faculty and by the college (*collegium*) of the CAS and the SAS. Theses for either degree are judged by commissions composed of eminent research workers specializing in the discipline in question. These commissions are appointed by the research councils of the faculties or institutions of higher education, and by the *collegia* of the CAS and the SAS. Questions relating to the conferment of both degrees are decided by the State Commission for Higher Degrees, whose

decision on such matters is final throughout Czechoslovakia. The president and members of the commission are appointed by the government.

The list of subjects in which higher degrees are conferred may be found in paragraph 4 of Law No. 53/1964; this list may be altered or added to as necessary by the State Commission for Higher Degrees.

Methods of establishing equivalences

Recognition of periods of study and degrees obtained abroad

The establishment of equivalences in respect of university studies and of ordinary and higher university degrees obtained abroad is uniformly regulated throughout Czechoslovakia.

The basic principles governing the establishment of equivalences with respect to higher education and higher educational qualifications (*vysokoškolské studium, vysokoškolské tituly*) are set out in paragraph 18 of the law relating to institutions of higher education. Detailed regulations are contained in the decree of the Minister of Education dated 23 March 1959 (No. 72/1959 in the *Official Journal*) on the recognition of studies undertaken in foreign institutions of higher education and foreign institutes of science and art.

Recognition (*nostrifikace*) of studies or of ordinary and higher degrees means that studies undertaken in foreign institutions of higher education, or ordinary and higher degrees obtained abroad, are regarded as equivalent to studies undertaken in a Czechoslovak institution of higher education and to the qualifications obtained in such an institution or in a research institution. Such recognition entitles its holder to all the rights enjoyed, under internal regulations, by those who have successfully completed their advanced studies and obtained ordinary or higher degrees in Czechoslovakia.

Advanced studies undertaken in foreign institutions of higher education are valid in Czechoslovakia provided they are expressly recognized. Recognition may apply either to the whole of the applicant's previous studies and final examinations, or only to certain examinations. In principle, recognition can only be granted if the applicant's studies correspond, in duration and scope, to studies that can be undertaken in Czechoslovak institutions of higher education. Exceptionally, candidates who have been sent abroad to study by the Czechoslovak Government may be exempted from these conditions.

If the scope and content of the candidate's training abroad correspond only partially to studies which can be undertaken in Czechoslovak institutions of higher education, he may obtain equivalence only if he passes a supplementary examination (*diferenčné zkouška*). This examination is not required of Czechoslovak nationals who have been awarded bursaries by their government to study in the U.S.S.R. or in other Socialist countries. Nor is it required of nationals of the U.S.S.R. or other Socialist countries who have

received their previous training at home and obtained a permit to live permanently in Czechoslovakia.

Decisions on the establishment of equivalence are taken by the dean of the faculty (or, if the school in question is not divided into faculties, by its rector) in which the special subject of study and the curriculum correspond wholly or partially with the course taken abroad.

If an applicant's previous studies do not correspond, in content or scope, to studies which can be undertaken in Czechoslovak institutions of higher education, the decision regarding the establishment of equivalence is taken by the dean of the faculty which has the curriculum most closely related to the applicant's previous studies. The faculty in question is designated by the Ministry of Education, except in cases where the ministry itself rules on the application.

Applicants may appeal against the dean's decision to the rector of the institution of higher education in question, whose decision is final.

Grants of equivalence to foreign citizens must be approved by the Ministry of Education.

Applications for equivalence must be accompanied by proof of the applicant's citizenship and documentary evidence of his studies in the institution of higher education or the science or art institute abroad. If the application relates to the whole of the applicant's studies, he must submit: a certificate to the effect that he has undertaken those studies; certificates in respect of all the set examinations he has taken; and, where appropriate, a diploma or other document certifying that he has successfully completed his studies in his own country. Unless international agreements provide otherwise, all signatures and stamps on the documents submitted must be authenticated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the applicant's country and by the Czechoslovak embassy there. If equivalence is sought for a completed course in medicine or pharmacy, the approval of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Health must be certified in writing.

If the applicant is a Czechoslovak national, he must also produce an extract from his court record and a *curriculum vitae*, stating why he undertook studies abroad; applicants who have been sent abroad by the Czechoslovak Government must present a certificate to this effect from the Ministry of Education.

Recognition is effected by affixing to the original document a certificate establishing equivalence throughout Czechoslovakia with effect from the date of recognition. If recognition is granted in respect of a completed course of study leading to a university degree, the corresponding degree conferred by Czechoslovak institutions of higher education is mentioned in the document and the applicant has the right to use it throughout Czechoslovakia. If the applicant has been required to pass the supplementary examination before securing recognition, the fact is mentioned in the certificate of equivalence.

The procedure described above is mainly used in connexion with applications by Czechoslovak nationals for the recognition of qualifications acquired abroad.

Foreign students undertaking post-graduate studies in Czechoslovakia

For foreign students proposing to undertake post-graduate studies leading to a higher degree in Czechoslovakia, the procedure is generally simpler. Their applications are dealt with by the University of 17 November in Prague, which, in addition to its ordinary academic and teaching duties, is the central organ for the reception of foreign students (including those wishing to study in other Czechoslovak institutions of higher education). This university keeps a register of all foreign students, looks after their material welfare and investigates the courses they have undertaken and the qualifications which they have obtained abroad. Decisions on applications for equivalence are taken by its Admissions Committee, which comprises representatives of the Ministry of Education, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and teachers in Czechoslovak institutions of higher education, and is presided over by the rector of the University of 17 November. The committee must be satisfied that the studies undertaken by the applicant abroad correspond, in content and scope, to the prescriptions for graduates wishing to undertake further study for the purpose of obtaining a higher degree in Czechoslovakia.

The Admissions Committee is guided by the directives issued on 15 February 1966 by the Ministry of Education (No. 5502/66, III.4c), which provide that possession of certain foreign qualifications entitles the holder to undertake post-graduate studies and enter upon the *aspirantura* (post-graduate study leading to a higher degree). These include: in English-speaking countries: master of science, master of laws, bachelor of medicine and bachelor of surgery, master of science (engineering), etc.; in French-speaking countries: *licencié ès sciences, licencié en droit, docteur en médecine, ingénieur mécanicien*, etc.; in Spanish-speaking countries: *licenciado en educación*, etc., *médico* or *ingeniero mecánico*, etc.

Equivalences to Czechoslovak higher degrees

Recognition of equivalence between certain higher degrees obtained abroad and the Czechoslovak higher degrees of *kandidát* of science and doctor of science is regulated by Law No. 53/1964 on the Conferment of Higher Degrees and the State Commission for Higher Degrees (paragraph 10) and by Order No. 198/1964 of the State Commission for Higher Degrees (paragraphs 43-49).

The law on this matter is based on the principle that higher degrees obtained abroad acquire validity in Czechoslovakia when they are recognized and equivalence has been established, but that only those degrees can be recognized which correspond in level to the higher degrees conferred in Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, certain examinations taken abroad may be recognized separately if it is necessary to have passed them in order to obtain a higher degree in Czechoslovakia.

Applications for equivalence in respect of higher degrees are dealt with by universities and other institutions of higher education and by the CAS and the SAS.

Applications are addressed to the research council of the appropriate faculty or institution of higher education, or to the research college (*collegium*) of the CAS or the SAS, which are empowered to nominate committees to evaluate the applicant's thesis for the degree of *kandidát* or the doctoral thesis or the examination for which equivalence is sought.

The application must be accompanied by a certificate of nationality, a document attesting the completion of the applicant's advanced studies, a copy of the thesis on the basis of which his higher degree was conferred, certificates relating to his previous studies, certificates in respect of such examinations as are required in order to obtain the higher degree in question in Czechoslovakia and a document certifying that the applicant possesses the higher degree for which he seeks equivalence. Unless international agreements provide otherwise, the signatures and stamps on all the documents submitted must be authenticated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by the Czechoslovak embassy in the country in which the applicant received the degree or passed the examination for which equivalence is sought.

If the applicant is a Czechoslovak national, he must also produce an extract from his court record and a *curriculum vitae*, in which he must state the reasons for which he undertook studies abroad. Students sent abroad by the Czechoslovak Government must also produce a certificate to this effect.

If the applicant is a foreigner, he must previously have the permission of the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior.

Applications are refused by the rector of the institution of higher education, the dean of the faculty or the president of the *collegium* of the CAS or the SAS, as the case may be, if the applicant does not submit all the required documents within the prescribed time limit. If he is a foreigner, his application is also rejected if the Ministry of the Interior does not give its consent. If the application is not refused on any of the above grounds, the authority to which it has been submitted appoints a single examiner, where recognition is sought for a *kandidát*'s degree or for an examination, and two examiners where recognition is sought for the degree of doctor of science.

The following may be appointed as examiners: doctors of science, university professors, research directors, 'docents' or holders of a degree of *kandidát* of science specializing in the subject in which the degree in question was conferred or who have passed the examination for which recognition is sought. Where recognition is sought for the degree of doctor of science, one of the examiners must either hold this degree or be a professor and a director of research. The examiners must indicate in writing, within the prescribed time limit, whether the higher degree for which recognition is sought corresponds in level to one of the higher degrees obtainable in Czechoslovakia. When the examiners have made their report, the application is ruled on by the body competent to confer the higher degree corresponding to that for which recognition is sought. For the degree of *kandidát* of science the deciding body is either the research council of a faculty, university or other institution of higher education, or the *collegium* or presidium of the

CAS or the SAS; in the case of the degree of doctor of science, the decision is taken by the research council of a university or other institution of higher education or by the presidium of the CAS or the SAS. Voting is secret (Law No. 19/1966, paragraph 46, subparagraph 3); the examiners are also entitled to vote and the decision is by simple majority of those present.

Internal regulations

Ministry of Education and Culture. Only in rare cases does the government, through the Ministry of Education and Culture or other ministries, take decisions in matters of the equivalence of courses taken and qualifications obtained abroad.

In accordance with Decree No. 72/1959 A.1 of the Ministry of Education dated 23 March 1959, decisions regarding the studies undertaken abroad which are referred to under 'Recognition of Periods of Study and Degrees Obtained Abroad' above are taken by the ministry only in cases where the studies in question do not correspond, in content and scope, to studies that can be undertaken in Czechoslovakia. Even when this is the case, the ministry may refer the question to one of the national institutions of higher education whose courses correspond most closely to those undertaken by the applicant.

Furthermore, the ministry can, in appropriate cases, grant exemptions from the regulations relating to equivalences. Thus, it can grant equivalence although the qualifications of the applicant do not fulfil the over-all requirements of Czechoslovak institutions of higher education, and it can also grant equivalence in respect of studies that correspond only partially, in content and scope, to studies undertaken in Czechoslovakia, without requiring the applicant to pass an additional examination. It can also recognize the equivalence of courses of study that cannot be pursued in Czechoslovak institutions of higher education and it can recognize degrees that those institutions do not confer.

State Commission for Higher Degrees. For the recognition of higher degrees, the central organ is the State Commission for Higher Degrees. Applications for the recognition of such degrees are submitted to the state commission if there is in Czechoslovakia no research council (of a faculty or institution of higher education) or *collegium* (of the CAS or the SAS) competent to nominate examining commissions in the field in question. In such cases, the state commission refers the application to the research council of the faculty or institution of higher education or *collegium* of the CAS or the SAS competent to appoint examination commissions in a closely related field of study. The state commission also deals with appeals against the refusal of applications, where such appeals are permitted, and keeps a central register of all equivalences granted. The secretariat of the state commission publishes decisions on applications in the *Official Journal* of the Ministry of Education and supplies successful applicants with a document certifying recognition of

their degree and specifying the date on which such recognition became effective. In exceptional cases, the state commission may grant exemptions from the regulations governing the recognition of higher degrees.

Bilateral and multilateral conventions and agreements

Friendship and co-operation agreements with foreign universities

Practically speaking, Czechoslovak universities have not yet concluded any bilateral or multilateral agreements with foreign universities regarding reciprocal recognition of studies undertaken or degrees conferred in the territory of the contracting parties.

The intenational cultural conventions concluded by Czechoslovak universities include friendship and co-operation agreements with foreign universities, in which the activities provided for in general terms under the various bilateral cultural conventions concluded at governmental or ministerial level are set out in detail. These agreements provide especially for co-operation in the solution of scientific problems, lecture tours by visiting professors and the reception and exchange of post-graduate students who wish to enter upon the *aspirantura*. They do not contain provisions for the reciprocal recognition of courses and qualifications required of graduate students wishing to obtain a higher degree; it is taken for granted that, in selecting students to be sent abroad under these agreements for advanced courses or training or post-graduate research, their home universities will satisfy themselves that they are properly qualified for whatever studies they are proposing to undertake. For this reason, recognition of courses and qualifications is not required in such cases, which are subject to no investigation of any kind.

These friendship and co-operation agreements are mainly concluded with universities in other Socialist countries.

Bilateral cultural conventions with foreign governments

The Czechoslovak government has concluded bilateral cultural conventions with the governments of all the Socialist countries in Europe and Asia, with Cuba and with Belgium, Bolivia, Denmark, France and Norway, and bilateral cultural agreements with Austria, Canada, Finland, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Mexico and Sweden. In addition, cultural agreements have been concluded with certain non-governmental organizations in a number of countries including the United Kingdom and the United States.

None of these conventions or agreements contains provisions for the reciprocal recognition of university courses and qualifications. It is taken for granted that a country sending graduate students to study or obtain a higher qualification abroad will satisfy itself that those selected fulfil the conditions required by the host country. Should a student, however, prove not to be suitably equipped for the proposed course of study, the reception

committee of the University of 17 November, in agreement with the embassy of his country, directs him to a more appropriate course.

The cultural conventions concluded by Czechoslovakia with other Socialist countries are supplemented and rendered more specific, with respect to student exchanges, by the bilateral agreements concluded between the Czechoslovak Ministry of Education and the ministries of education of other Socialist countries. These agreements provide that, in the case of students sent to undertake only part of their studies abroad, the host country will not recognize examinations passed by the students in question in their own country unless the curricula correspond with those followed in the host country.

Studies undertaken and degrees or other qualifications obtained are recognized in the country of origin in accordance with that country's own internal regulations.

France

by Henri Rachou

Introduction

Before giving any definition of equivalences of university degrees and diplomas for academic purposes, we must distinguish between equivalences and closely related systems allowing students recognition in France for courses taken or examinations passed at foreign universities.

Official acceptance

A decree dated 2 August 1960 stipulates that diplomas awarded by foreign establishments of higher education under the same conditions with regard to entrance qualifications, length of course, curricula and examinations as the corresponding French diplomas can be officially accepted by French faculties.

The Ministry of Education issues an order each year, after consultation with the Board of Higher Education (Conseil de l'Enseignement Supérieur), listing the diplomas issued by foreign establishments of higher education which holders may submit for official acceptance.

This decree lays down the subjects and content of any additional examinations which holders may be required to pass.

In all cases applicants must prove that they have an adequate knowledge of the French language, either by furnishing written evidence of their knowledge or by passing a special examination.

Those persons wishing to benefit from the provisions of the decree of 2 August 1960 must make application to one of the French faculties competent to award a diploma corresponding to the foreign diploma submitted for acceptance. The original of the latter must be attached to the application.

After the applicant's qualifications have been verified and the additional examinations provided for in Article 2 of the decree of 2 August 1960 have been passed, where necessary, the faculty awards the French diploma corresponding to the foreign diploma of which evidence has been given.

The procedure for official acceptance therefore results in the awarding of French diplomas. Until now it has been used mainly for certificates or diplomas awarded by universities which were formerly French (Phnom-Penh, Rabat, Saigon). It ceased to be used when the length of course and

examination conditions were no longer the same as those obtaining in the French faculties (Phnom-Penh, Saigon).

The list of certificates and diplomas issued in 1965 which can be officially accepted under the decree of 2 August 1960 contains only qualifications conferred by the University of Rabat and the Federal University of Cameroon.

De facto recognition

A number of agreements covering co-operation in respect of higher education have been concluded between the French Republic and foreign States which were formerly part of the French Republic: Algeria, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Senegal. These agreements provide for a system by which certificates and diplomas awarded by universities in these States are given *de facto* recognition in France provided they are included in a list drawn up annually by decree of the French Ministry of Education and published in the official gazette of the French Republic (*Journal Officiel*).

Holders cannot apply for the corresponding French diplomas, but their foreign qualifications give them the same rights, whether they wish to enrol in French higher-education institutions or to practise a profession.

De facto recognition may not be strictly respected by certain private firms when they recruit on the basis of qualifications, but there is no risk that it will be refused if the person concerned is enrolling in a French higher-education institution or entering the civil service.

The list of certificates and diplomas issued in 1965 and given *de facto* recognition in France includes those issued by the universities of Algiers, Abidjan, Dakar and Madagascar and the Fondation de l'Enseignement Supérieur en Afrique Centrale (Brazzaville).

De facto recognition, of course, is only given if foreign diplomas are issued under the same conditions with regard to entrance qualifications, length of course, curricula and examinations as the corresponding French diplomas.

Equivalences

The French system of equivalences of university qualifications for academic purposes differs from both official acceptance and *de facto* recognition.

It may be defined as a set of measures allowing students who have studied and passed examinations at foreign universities to be exempted either from a part of the course and the examinations required for a French diploma or from the need to hold a French degree or diploma in order to obtain a higher degree. This definition has the following consequences:

Persons granted equivalence cannot, as with official acceptance, obtain a French diploma straight away. They always have to take courses and sit examinations.

Generally speaking, equivalence has no effect on status, except where special legislation or regulations are in force, whereas foreign diplomas that have

been given *de facto* recognition in France enable their holders to practise all the professions open to the holders of the corresponding French diplomas; no special authorization is necessary.

Holders of an equivalent foreign diploma may enrol in French faculties just as if they held the corresponding French diploma.

Only the academic effects of equivalence are covered in the present study, i.e. the facilities that may be granted for enrolment in certain faculties.

Methods of establishing equivalences

International agreements

International agreements are not the chief source of the equivalences granted in France. However, there are a great many cultural conventions or agreements containing, in general terms, provisions establishing the principle of equivalences for academic purposes and entrusting a joint commission with the task of studying practical ways and means of applying this principle. Sometimes these international agreements are more precise, but they rarely go beyond the equivalence of secondary-school leaving certificates.

In France the practical application of a principle laid down in an international agreement is never the result of a decision taken by any one university; it is subject to national regulations binding on all universities.

Centralization is almost total in France, and international agreements cannot be applied except through provisions made in decrees or decisions published in the official gazette of the French Republic and applicable in all faculties.

Internal regulations

The system of equivalences between university degrees and diplomas for academic purposes has been established in France chiefly by internal regulations, that is, by decrees or orders as the case may be.

No equivalence can be granted unless it is expressly provided for in a decree or an order. Jurisprudence plays a relatively unimportant role. It can only enter into the application of regulations, within the framework of those regulations.

No usage can be established in the absence of legal provisions: the faculties cannot grant equivalences in addition to those provided for in the national regulations.

Decrees authorizing equivalences are either administrative regulations issued in pursuance of a law and drawn up after the Council of State has been consulted or, more commonly, simply decrees issued without consultation of the Council of State and signed by the Prime Minister on the basis of a report of the Minister of Education and with his counter-signature.

All orders are issued by the Minister of Education. More often than not they are made in application of decrees.

Decrees and orders cannot be issued without prior consultation of the Board of Higher Education and, in certain cases, the National Education Council (Conseil Supérieur de l'Education Nationale), which is competent for all levels of education (for example, when the equivalence affects the *licence d'enseignement*[1] entitling the holder to teach in secondary schools).

We have seen that internal regulations can result from an international agreement, following recommendations made by a joint commission provided for by a cultural agreement. They can also originate in proposals made by the government or proposals made by the faculties.

Government proposals. Apart from international agreements or proposals made by the faculties, the central authority may elaborate draft provisions with regard to equivalences between university degrees and diplomas for academic purposes, and it very often does. The various departments coming under the Minister of Education—particularly the Directorate of Higher Education and the Directorate of Co-operation—have the task of studying and proposing, in agreement with the competent services of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and within the framework of the government's general policy, any measures aimed at encouraging foreign students to come to France or enabling French students to do a part of their courses abroad. In most cases the draft decrees or orders are submitted direct to the Board of Higher Education. However, the more important ones are first communicated to the faculties concerned so that the latter can express an opinion on them.

The minister is free to act in accordance with the opinions expressed by the faculties and the Board of Higher Education, or not, but the decisions made are generally consistent with their views.

Faculty proposals. A faculty can take the initiative in proposing an equivalence to the central authority. The faculty assembly is competent in this sphere. The decision is forwarded through the regional director of education (*recteur d'académie*) who is chairman of the university council, to the Directorate of Higher Education, which generally consults all the faculties concerned before submitting the matter to the Board of Higher Education.

Juridical basis of equivalences

Theoretically, equivalences of diplomas can be based on and justified by the fact that courses and examinations are either identical or on the same level and of equal value.

1. *Licence:* first university degree.

It is exceptional for entrance qualifications, curricula, duration of studies and examinations all to be identical. As we have seen, when this is so, official acceptance or *de facto* recognition may be granted. This hardly ever occurs except in universities which were formerly French and have retained the French system of courses and examinations.

In most cases equivalence is justified by the fact that qualifications are of the same value and on the same level.

There is no need for admission requirements, curricula, duration of course, examinations and methods of setting up juries to be the same. The foreign diploma has only to be of equal value to the French diploma for equivalence to be granted. It is the 'flag on the mast' which counts rather than the 'goods'.

However, it must not be inferred from this principle that equivalence can be granted when the conditions governing courses and examinations are very different. There must obviously be some similarity; the courses leading to the two diplomas must be of the same nature, belong to the same discipline and cover the same subjects.

To take an example, a candidate for a French law degree can be granted equivalence for attendance for the first year and for the examinations if he has completed a year's work in law at a foreign university. He does not have to have done exactly the same course or passed the same examinations; it is realized that positive law varies from one country to another. However, the candidate must have done a course and passed examinations corresponding as far as possible to the first year of the French degree course.

Conditions governing the granting of equivalences

In France equivalences are granted either by the faculties, or by a decision of the regional director of education, or by a decision of the Minister of Education.

The faculties grant equivalences straight away when the latter are explicitly authorized by a decree or an order. They have only to see that the applicant actually holds the equivalent foreign diploma. For instance, holders of the Italian *laurea* (first university degree) in science are granted equivalence with the French *licence* in science for the purpose of proceeding to the French State doctorate in science.[1] To obtain this equivalence they have only to submit the original *laurea* to the secretariat of the faculty.

The regional director of education, who is chairman of the university council, grants the equivalence of the *baccalauréat* (certificate of secondary studies) if the applicant can furnish evidence that he holds a foreign qualification included in a list drawn up by the Minister of Education.

In many cases the Minister of Education after examining the candidate's qualifications, can grant equivalence by an individual decision, but only if this possibility is provided for by a regulation.

1. State doctorate: highest university degree.

The procedure for granting equivalences is therefore very strict. No authority can depart from the written law. No equivalence can be granted except by virtue of published regulations. All students, as all citizens, are equal before the law.

Lists of equivalences between diplomas and university degrees

We shall not attempt to give an exhaustive table of equivalences of foreign diplomas and degrees granted by France for academic purposes, but it seemed necessary, in order to illustrate the foregoing, to list the principal equivalences granted to students who have received a higher education in foreign countries and wish to continue their studies in France.

A. *Baccalauréat*

Establishment of equivalences for students of French nationality. French universities admit, as students for all the degrees, certificates and other qualifications awarded by the various faculties and schools, applicants of French nationality who, owing to the fact that their parents settled abroad, have received all or part of their secondary education outside France and who produce, in lieu of the French *baccalauréat*, a diploma, certificate or other qualification recognized in the country of origin as giving access to higher education. A list of these diplomas, certificates and other qualifications is drawn up annually by the Minister of Education.

The diploma, certificate or other qualification is declared equivalent to the French *baccalauréat* by the regional director of education for the area where the faculty or school in which the student wishes to enrol is situated.

Applications must be accompanied by:

1. A copy of the applicant's birth certificate.
2. The original diploma, certificate or other qualification for which equivalence is requested, and a translation thereof. The translation must be certified as authentic, either by an officially recognized translator in France or by a French diplomatic or consular agent residing in the country in which the diploma, certificate or other qualification was issued.
3. A statement from a French diplomatic or consular agent testifying that when the diploma, certificate or other qualification was obtained, the holder's parents had been living abroad for at least five years, unless this requirement is waived by the Minister of Education.

A decision as to equivalence is taken in each case by the rector, specifying the foreign diploma, certificate or other qualification recognized as equivalent. A copy of this decision is forwarded to the minister within fifteen days.

If the foreign diplomas, certificates or other qualifications produced are not included in the above-mentioned list, equivalences to the *baccalauréat*

can still be granted, for the same purpose, to students of French nationality who have received their secondary education under the conditions described above.

Application must be made in the same way and the same information must be furnished, but it is the minister who examines the file and takes a decision after consulting the dean or principal and the regional director of education.

Establishment of equivalences for students of foreign nationality. Students of foreign nationality may be admitted to French universities if the diplomas, certificates or other qualifications which give access to higher education in their countries of origin have been recognized as the equivalent of the French *baccalauréat*. A list of these diplomas, certificates and other qualifications is drawn up annually by the Minister of Education. (See Appendix, I, page 40.)

However, such students cannot enrol for courses leading to the State degrees or diplomas of doctor of medicine, pharmacist or dental surgeon unless they hold the diplomas required of French students wishing to take these courses. On the other hand, they can study for all other State diplomas, as also for the university diplomas of doctor of medicine, pharmacist and dental surgeon, which have the same academic standing as the corresponding State diplomas but do not entitle the holder to practise in France.

These equivalences are decided upon by the regional director of education for the area where the faculty or school in which the student wishes to enrol is situated.

Applications must be accompanied by the foreign diploma, certificate or other qualification for which equivalence is requested, and by identification papers. These documents must be stamped either by a French diplomatic or consular agent residing in the country of origin or by a representative of that country accredited in France. The originals must be accompanied by true translations, certified as such either by an officially recognized translator in France or by one of the diplomatic or consular agents whose endorsement is required.

A decision is taken as to each equivalence specifying the foreign diploma, certificate or other qualification. A list of these decisions is forwarded to the minister every month.

If the foreign diplomas, certificates or other qualifications produced are not included in the above-mentioned list, equivalences to the *baccalauréat* can still be granted, for the same purposes, to students of foreign nationality.

Application must be made as above, but it is the minister who examines the file and takes a decision, after consulting the dean or principal and the regional director of education.

Special examination for foreign students. Foreigners who hold no qualification which can be recognized as equivalent to the French *baccalauréat* can sit a special examination, which is held annually in the first half of October. A pass in this examination is recognized as equivalent to the *baccalauréat*,

except for entrance to courses leading to the State diplomas of doctor of medicine, pharmacist or dental surgeon. Successful candidates can study for any of the other State diplomas, or for the university diplomas of doctor of medicine, pharmacist or dental surgeon, which have the same academic standing as the corresponding State diplomas, but do not entitle the holder to practise in France.

B. Faculties of law and economics

Courses and examinations leading to the French licence *in law*[1] *or economics.*[2] In Article 25 of Decree No. 54-343, dated 27 March 1954, whose provisions again occur in Article 29 of Decree No. 62-768, dated 10 July 1962, it is stipulated that equivalence can be granted for the first two years and the first two examinations on the basis of qualifications obtained in foreign faculties. This requires a ministerial decision made on a proposal of the assembly of the faculties of law and economics.

This measure was extended to the *licence* in economics by Article 12 of Decree No. 60-844, dated 6 August 1960.

Equivalences of the French licence *in law or economics.* Candidates for the French State diploma of doctor of law or doctor of economics (*docteur en droit, docteur ès sciences économiques*) who hold certain degrees or qualifications, recognized for this purpose as equivalent (see Appendix, II, page 45), are exempted from having to produce the *licence* in law or the *licence* in economics, as the case may be.

C. Faculties of medicine

Students of foreign nationality may enrol for the purpose of obtaining the French university degrees of doctor of medicine (*docteur en médecine*) or dental surgeon (*chirurgien-dentiste*) if they hold foreign qualifications equivalent to the French qualifications required of candidates for the French State degree of doctor of medicine or dental surgeon (i.e. the *baccalauréat* and the *certificat préparatoire aux études médicales*).

Students of foreign nationality may enrol for the purpose of obtaining the French State degrees of doctor of medicine or dental surgeon if they hold the French qualifications required of candidates for those degrees.

Foreigners who wish to obtain the university degree of doctor of medicine and who hold a foreign degree of doctor of medicine or have taken a course leading to that degree must produce foreign qualifications equivalent to the French qualifications required of candidates for the French State degree of doctor of medicine (the *baccalauréat* and the *certificat préparatoire aux*

1. *Licence en droit.*
2. *Licence ès sciences économiques.*

études médicales). The most from which they can be exempted is the first three years of the course and the first three end-of-year examinations.

Foreigners or French nationals who wish to obtain the French State degree and who hold a foreign degree of doctor of medicine or have taken a course leading to that degree, must: produce the French *baccalauréat* and the French *certificat préparatoire aux études médicales*; pass all the examinations.

They can be exempted at most from the first three years of the course.

Foreigners who wish to obtain the university degree of dental surgeon and who hold a foreign degree of dental surgeon or have taken a course leading to that degree must produce foreign qualifications equivalent to the French qualifications required of candidates for the French State degree of dental surgeon (the *baccalauréat* and the *certificat préparatoire aux études médicales*). They can be exempted at most from the first and the fourth years of the course and the corresponding end-of-year examinations.

Foreigners or French nationals who wish to obtain the French State degree of dental surgeon and who hold a foreign degree of dental surgeon or who have taken a course leading to that degree must hold the French *baccalauréat* and the French *certificat préparatoire aux études médicales*.

They may be exempted from the first year of the course. They must pass all the examinations.

The equivalence of qualifications and exemptions from courses or examinations provided for above are granted by the Minister of Education after consultation with the Board of Higher Education.

D. Faculties of pharmacy and faculties of medicine and pharmacy

Foreigners may enrol for the course leading to the university pharmacist's diploma (*diplôme de pharmacien*) if they hold a foreign qualification equivalent to the French *baccalauréat*.

They can enrol for the course leading to the French State degree of pharmacist if they have the French *baccalauréat*.

Foreigners who wish to obtain the university pharmacist's diploma and who hold a foreign qualification as a pharmacist or who have taken a course leading to that qualification must produce a foreign qualification equivalent to the French *baccalauréat*.

They can at most be exempted from: the first probationary period of dispensing; the first three years of the course; the first three end-of-year examinations.

Foreigners or French nationals who wish to obtain the French State degree and who hold a foreign diploma as a pharmacist or who have taken a course leading to that diploma must: produce the French *baccalauréat*; do the two probationary periods of dispensing; pass all the examinations.

They can at most be exempted from the first three years of the course.

The equivalences of qualifications or the exemptions from courses or examinations provided for above are granted by the Minister of Education after consultation with the Board of Higher Education.

E. Faculties of science

First-year equivalences. In accordance with Article 6 of Decree No. 66-411, dated 22 June 1966, equivalence for the first year of higher education in science and the first-year examination is granted to candidates who produce an approved foreign qualification.

Equivalence is granted for each science faculty by a decision of the dean, made on a proposal of the assembly of the faculty (Article 5 of the order dated 11 July 1966).

Licence *or master's degree.* In accordance with Article 9 of Decree No. 66-411, dated 22 June 1966, equivalence for university degrees in science is granted to candidates who produce an approved foreign qualification.

Equivalence is granted by a decision of the Minister of Education on a proposal of the assembly of a science faculty after consultation with the Board of Higher Education.

State doctorate in science. Candidates for the French State doctorate in science (*diplôme d'État de docteur ès sciences*) who hold foreign qualifications recognized as equivalent are exempted from producing the French master's degree. A list of these foreign qualifications will be drawn up by the Minister of Education in the form of a decision, which is now being elaborated.

As a result of the reform of science teaching at university level the list of foreign qualifications recognized as equivalent to the *licence* for the purpose of obtaining the French State doctorate in science is no longer applicable. Candidates for this degree will now have to produce a master's degree instead of a *licence.*

Doctorate in engineering. Certain foreign qualifications are accepted in the absence of certificates of higher education in science for the purpose of enrolling for courses leading to the doctorate in engineering (*diplôme de docteur ingénieur*). (See Appendix, III, page 48.)

F. Faculties of arts

First-year equivalences. In accordance with Article 4 of Decree No. 66-412, dated 22 June 1966, equivalence is granted, for the purpose of obtaining a university degree in arts, for the first year of an arts course and the corresponding examinations to candidates who hold one of the approved foreign qualifications.

These qualifications were listed in the order dated 22 June 1966 (Article 1). (See Appendix, IV, page 50.)

Candidates not possessing one of these qualifications may obtain equivalence for the first year of the course and the corresponding examination for the purpose of obtaining a university degree in arts by a decision of the

Minister of Education on a proposal of the dean of the faculty, after consultation with the Board of Higher Education.

University-degree equivalences. In accordance with Article 9 of Decree no. 66-412, dated 22 June 1966, equivalence is granted to students who hold one of the approved foreign qualifications.

These qualifications were listed in the order dated 22 June 1966 (Article 2). (See Appendix, V, page 51.)

Candidates who do not hold one of these qualifications may obtain equivalence for the university degree in arts by a decision of the Minister of Education on a proposal of the dean of the faculty after consultation with the Board of Higher Education.

State doctorate in letters. Candidates for the French State degree of doctor of letters (*docteur ès lettres*) are exempted from producing a master's degree if they hold one of the foreign qualifications recognized for this purpose as equivalent and listed in a decree of the Minister of Education. This decree is now being drawn up.

Following the reform of higher education in arts, the list of foreign qualifications recognized as equivalent to the *licence* for the purpose of obtaining the French State degree of doctor of letters is no longer applicable. Candidates for this degree must now hold a master's degree instead of a *licence*.

Appendix Lists of foreign qualifications recognized as equivalent

I. Foreign qualifications recognized as equivalent to the *baccalauréat*

Afghanistan. Secondary-school leaving certificate issued by the Afghan Minister for Education on a proposal of the French head of Amanieh College, Kabul, and signed by the head.

Albania. Leaving certificate from the national secondary school at Korcë.

Algeria. Baccalauréat.

Argentina. Certificate for the full secondary course issued by a national college.

Australia. See *United Kingdom.*

Austria. Matriculation certificate *(Reifezeugnis,* or *Abschluss und Reifezeugnis)* issued by an institution of one of the following four categories: *Gymnasium, Realgymnasium, Realschule, Frauenoberschule.*

Belgium. Belgian qualifications accepted as equivalent to the *baccalauréat,* solely for the following purposes:

For the *licence en droit,* the *licence ès lettres* and studies in a theological faculty: *certificat homologué d'humanités gréco-latines.*

For the *licence ès sciences: certificat homologué d'humanités gréco-latines avec complément de mathématiques; certificat homologué d'humanités latines-mathématiques; certificat homologué d'humanités modernes scientifiques.*

For the diploma in pharmacy: *certificat homologué d'humanités gréco-latines avec complément de mathématiques; certificat homologué d'humanités latines-mathématiques.*

For degrees in physics, chemistry or biology and the degrees of doctor of medicine or dental surgeon: *certificat homologué d'humanités gréco-latines; certificat homologué d'humanités latines-mathématiques; certificat de latin-sciences* (new system).

Bolivia. Matriculation certificate *(certificado de ingreso)* entitling the holder to enter a Bolivian university faculty.

Brazil. Certificate issued after four years' study at a secondary school.

Bulgaria. Secondary-school leaving certificate issued by the French colleges of Saint-Augustin et Saint-Joseph, Plovdiv (Philippopolis), Saint-Michel, Varna, the

Institut Français Notre-Dame-de-Sion, Ruse (Rustchuk) or the École Française de Commerce des Frères, Sofia.

Matriculation certificate from a Bulgarian national secondary school, a Bulgarian teacher-training college or the Bulgarian seminaries in Sofia and Plovdiv

Matriculation certificate from the Kouzmin Russian College (School of Modern Languages), Sofia.

Matriculation certificate from the Collège Saint-André, Varna. Secondary-school leaving certificate from the Collège Français des Sœurs de Saint-Joseph, Sofia.

Canada. See *United Kingdom.*

Chili. Secondary-school certificate *(licencia secundaria).*

China (mainland). Secondary-school certificate issued by the 'Dawn University', Shanghai (preparatory course).

Leaving certificate issued by the Russian School, Harbin, Manchuria.

Secondary-school leaving certificate issued by the Municipal College, Shanghai.

Higher secondary-school certificate from the Institut Franco-Chinois de Changhaï.

Colombia. School-leaving certificate issued by one of the secondary schools designated by the Colombian Minister for Education and accompanied by a testimonial to the effect that the candidate has passed the entrance examination at a Colombian university.

Costa Rica. General school-leaving certificate issued by a secondary school.

Cuba. School-leaving certificate (arts or science) issued by a secondary school.

Cyprus. Leaving certificate *(apolytirion)* issued by a Greek secondary school in Cyprus (but not a Greek commercial school).

Czechoslovakia. Matriculation certificate from a *Realgymnasium* or a reformed *Gymnasium.*

Matriculation certificate from a *Realschule* plus a pass in a complementary examination provided for in an Austrian order dated 29 March 1909.

Denmark. Secondary-school leaving certificate *(studentereksamen)* in one of the following three categories: classical languages, modern languages or mathematics/science.

Dominican Republic. School-leaving certificate.

Ecuador. School-leaving certificate issued by a national college.

El Salvador. School-leaving certificate.

Ethiopia. Degree of bachelor of arts or bachelor of sciences issued by the University College of Addis Ababa.

Finland. Secondary-school leaving certificate.

Federal Republic of Germany. Matriculation certificate *(Reifezeugnis* or *Zeugnis der Reife)* issued either by a secondary school or by an *Aufbauschule* with six classes.

Authorization to enter the university without a matriculation certificate, issued either in Prussia (in application of the Prussian decrees dated 19 September 1919 and 11 June 1924) or in the other *Länder* (in application of similar decrees).

Greece. Leaving certificate *(apolytirion* or *apodeiktikon)* issued by a Greek secondary school, but not a commercial school.

Guatemala. Matriculation certificate (science or arts).

Guinea. Matriculation certificate.

Haiti. School-leaving certificate (arts or arts/science).

Honduras. Bachelor's degree from the University of Tegucigalpa.

Hong Kong. See *United Kingdom.*

Hungary. Matriculation or school-leaving certificate issued by a secondary school.

Iceland. Secondary-school leaving certificate *(stûdentspróf)* in languages or science.

India. The degree of bachelor of arts or bachelor of science (first class or second class) awarded by a university, provided that the candidate has obtained more than half marks (order dated 25 February 1950).

Iran. Secondary-school leaving certificate (sixth year) issued by the Education Minister to candidates who pass the examination.

Ireland. See *United Kingdom.*

Israel. Secondary-school leaving certificate issued by the Minister of Education and giving admission to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Haifa Institute of Technology.

Italy. Matriculation certificate (classical languages or science). Certificate from the Moorat Raphaël Armenian Technical Secondary School, Venice.

Japan. Leaving certificate issued by secondary schools coming under the Ministry of Education, or the French Athénée, Tokyo, the School of the Morning Star, Tokyo, or foreign-language schools in Tokyo or Osaka.

Republic of Korea. Leaving certificate issued by an upper secondary school.

Lebanon. Lebanese matriculation certificate issued by the President of the Lebanese Republic, Beirut.

Bachelor of arts degree from the American University, Beirut.

Luxembourg. Leaving certificate (formerly matriculation certificate) issued by the Luxembourg secondary schools at Diekirch and Echternach, the Latin section of the boys' secondary schools (formerly industrial and commercial schools) at Luxembourg and Esch-sur-Alzette and the girls' secondary schools at Luxembourg and Esch-sur-Alzette.

Leaving certificate (formerly proficiency certificate) from the industrial subsection of the modern section, the boys' secondary schools (formerly industrial and commercial schools) at Luxembourg and Esch-sur-Alzette.

Matriculation certificate issued by the École Européenne de Luxembourg (order dated 27 May 1957).

Mali. Malian *baccalauréat.*

Malta. See *United Kingdom.*

Mexico. Certificate issued by a national preparatory school after a preparatory course leading to university education.

Morocco. Baccalauréat (defined by an order of the Moroccan Minister of Education, dated 1 February 1963).

Netherlands. School certificate provided for under Article 57 of the Netherlands law on secondary education (2 May 1863, amended by the law dated 1 March 1920).

School certificate provided for under Article 55, paragraph 2, of the Netherlands law on secondary education (2 May 1863, amended by the law dated 1 March 1920).

School certificate provided for under Article 11 of the Netherlands law on higher education dated 28 April 1876.

School certificate provided for under Article 12 of the Netherlands law dated 28 April 1876 (amended by a law dated 22 May 1905).

School certificate provided for under Article 157 of the Netherlands law on higher education dated 28 April 1876.

New Zealand. See *United Kingdom.*

Nicaragua. Matriculation certificate (science or arts) issued by the President of the Republic.

Norway. Matriculation certificate *(examen artium* or *studenteksamen).*

Panama. Matriculation certificate (arts or science) issued by the Panamanian National Institute.

Matriculation certificate (science or arts) from the Collège de la Salle, Panama.

Paraguay. Matriculation certificate issued by the Board of Secondary and Higher Education.

Peru. Matriculation certificate (arts or science).
School-leaving certificate issued after five years' secondary education.

Poland. Matriculation certificate *(świadectwo dojrzałości)* awarded by a State secondary school.
Matriculation certificate *(świadectwo dojrzałości)* awarded to pupils in private secondary schools after they have passed an examination before a jury set up by the superintendent of an educational district.
Matriculation certificate *(Reifezeugnis* or *Zeugnis der Reife)* issued by a *Gymnasium, Realgymnasium* or secondary *Realschule* of the Free City of Danzig (Gdańsk).

Portugal. Certificate issued at the end of a complementary course in arts or science at a national secondary school.
School-leaving certificate issued at the end of the third cycle (seventh year) in a national secondary school.

Romania. Secondary-school leaving certificate issued by the Romanian Minister of Education.

Saudi Arabia. Secondary-school leaving certificate (science or arts).

Spain. Matriculation certificate issued by the rector of a university.

Sweden. Matriculation certificate issued by a State secondary school *(latin-gymnasium* or *realgymnasium).*

Switzerland. Federal matriculation certificate of type A, B or C, issued by the Federal Matriculation Commission or an educational authority in one of the cantons.
Baccalauréat.

Syria. Matriculation certificate issued by the Syrian Minister of Education.
General secondary-school leaving certificate (science or arts) issued by the Minister of Education.

Thailand. Matayom VIII.
Certificate issued at the end of the second year of a preparatory course at the university.

Tunisia. Baccalauréat.

Turkey. Second-cycle certificate for Turkish secondary schools.
State certificate for secondary schools.
Secondary-school certificate for foreign schools in Turkey.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
Estonia. Matriculation certificate issued by a State school.
Matriculation certificate issued by one of the following private secondary schools: Dôme, Kubu, Lender, St. Charles, Treffner and Westholm at Tallinn; the secondary school for the Russian minority, the secondary school of the

Society for the Education of Youth, at Tartu; the secondary school for the Lettonian minority at Valga; the secondary school of the Society for the Propagation of Instruction at Wiliandi; the boys' and girls' secondary school at Woru.

Matriculation certificate issued by any free institution and approved by the Estonian Minister of Education.

Latvia. Matriculation certificate *(gatavihas aplieciba)* issued by Latvian secondary schools and those of national or religious minorities (German, Jewish, Polish, Russian, etc.).

Lithuania. Matriculation certificate issued by a State secondary school.

Matriculation certificate issued by private secondary schools assimilated to the State schools and signed by the representative of the Lithuanian Minister of Education.

United Arab Republic. Secondary-school certificate issued by the Egyptian Government.

Matriculation certificate or leaving certificate *(apolytirion)* issued by a Greek secondary school in Egypt, but not a Greek commercial school.

United Kingdom and countries and territories which formerly belonged to the British Empire. Matriculation certificate issued by one of the universities of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Malta, or New Zealand.

Any diploma obtained in one of these countries or territories and accompanied by a testimonial from the Universities Bureau of the British Commonwealth (5 Gordon Square, London, W.1) to the effect that the diploma entitles its holder to be admitted as a regular student to one of the universities of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Malta, or New Zealand.

United States of America. Certificate testifying that the candidate, after doing two years of a bachelor of arts course or a bachelor of sciences course, has been accepted for enrolment in a junior class in an institution accredited by one of the following regional university associations: Middle States Association of Colleges, New England Association of Colleges, North Central Association ot Colleges, North West Association of Secondary and Higher Schools, Southern Association of Colleges, Western Association of Colleges.

Uruguay. Bachelor's degree (science or arts) from the University of Montevideo.

Venezuela. Bachelor's degree in philosophy.

Yugoslavia. Matriculation certificate issued by a State secondary school.

II. Equivalences of the French *licence* in law or economics for the purpose of obtaining the French State diploma of doctor of law or doctor of economics

Australia. Degree of doctor of laws from the University of Adelaide. Degree of master of laws from the University of Melbourne. Degrees of bachelor of laws (first class honours) or doctor of laws from the University of Sydney. Degree of master of laws from the University of Hobart.

Belgium. Doctorat en droit, grade légal.

Bulgaria. Certificate issued after four years' study and a pass in the second university examination.

Cambodia. Licence en droit issued by the Faculty of Law and Economics, Phnom-Penh.

Cameroon. Licence en droit et ès sciences économiques issued by the Federal University of Cameroon.

Canada. Licence en droit from the University of Montreal. *Licence en droit* from the University of Laval. Degrees of bachelor of civil law and bachelor of laws (first class and second class honours) from McGill University. Degree of bachelor of laws *(cum laude)* from the University of Alberta. Degree of bachelor of laws *(magna cum laude)* from the University of Saskatchewan. Degree of bachelor of laws *(magna cum laude)* from the University of Manitoba (order dated 30 June 1961).

For the *doctorat ès sciences économiques:* the *licence ès sciences commerciales* (applied economics) issued by the École des Hautes Études Commerciales, University of Montreal.

Czechoslovakia. Three examinations *(rigorosa)* for the doctorate.

Denmark. Master's degree in law. Candidature for the master's degree in law.

Federal Republic of Germany. Certificate awarded for a pass in the first State examination in law *(Erste juristische Staatsprüfung).*

Greece. Licence en droit.

Haiti. Licence en droit, Faculty of Law, Port-au-Prince.

India. Degree of bachelor of laws (first division) from the University of Bombay. Degree of bachelor of laws (first division) from the University of Calcutta. Degree of bachelor of laws (first division or honours in law) from the University of the Punjab. Degree of bachelor of law (first division) from the University of Patna.

Iran. Licence from the Teheran Law School.

Iraq. Licence en droit from the Faculty of Law, Baghdad.

Ireland. Degree of bachelor of laws from the National University of Ireland.

Italy. Laurea in giurisprudenza.

Japan. Licence en droit.

Luxembourg. Doctorate in law of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Malta. Degree of doctor of laws from the University of Malta.

Morocco. For the *doctorat en droit* and the *doctorat ès sciences politiques:* the *licence en droit* (juridical sciences, or political sciences).

For the *doctorat ès sciences économiques: licence en droit* (economics).

Netherlands. Master's degree in law.

New Zealand. Degree of bachelor of laws (honours) from the University of New Zealand.

Poland. Master's degree in law.

Portugal. Licence en droit.

Romania. Licence en droit.

Saarland. Licence en droit from the Faculty of Law and Economics, Saarbrücken (order dated 10 March 1950).

Switzerland. For both doctorates: *doctorat juris utriusque* from the universities of Basle, Berne or Zürich; *doctorat en droit* from the University of Lausanne (juridical sciences or political economy); *licence en droit* from the universities of Freiburg, Geneva, Lausanne or Neuchâtel.

For the *doctorat ès sciences politiques et économiques: doctorat rerum cameralium* from the University of Zürich; *doctorat ès sciences sociales* and *doctorat ès sciences politiques* from the School of Social Sciences attached to the Faculty of Law, University of Lausanne; *doctorat ès sciences commerciales et économiques* from the University of Neuchâtel; *doctorat ès sciences commerciales et ès sciences économiques appliquées* and *doctorat ès sciences administratives et commerciales* from the School of Advanced Commercial Studies attached to the Faculty of Law, University of Lausanne; *licence ès sciences politiques* from the University of Geneva; *licence ès sciences sociales* or *licence ès sciences politiques* from the School of Social Sciences attached to the Faculty of Law, University of Lausanne; *licence ès sciences politiques et administratives* and *licence ès sciences sociales* (Group A) from the University of Neuchâtel.

Syria. Licence en droit from the University of Damascus.

Tunisia. Licence en droit. Licence ès sciences économiques.

Turkey. Licence en droit from the universities of Ankara or Istanbul.

United Arab Republic. Licence en droit.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Degree of bachelor of arts (first class honours) from the universities of Oxford or Cambridge. Degree of bachelor of laws (first class honours) from the University of London. Degree of bachelor of laws (first class honours) from the other English and Welsh universities. Degree of bachelor of laws from the Scottish universities. Degree of bachelor of laws from the University of Belfast.

United States of America (Order dated 23 July 1963). Degree of bachelor of law obtained following a degree of bachelor of arts or bachelor of sciences. Degree of master of arts (political science).

For the *doctorat ès sciences économiques:* degree of master of arts (economics).

The above-mentioned degrees must be obtained from an institution approved by one of the following regional university associations: Middle States Association of Colleges, New England Association of Colleges, North Central Association of Colleges, North West Association of Secondary and Higher Schools, Southern Association of Colleges, Western Association of Colleges.

Viet-Nam (*Republic of*). *Licence en droit* from the University of Saigon.

Yugoslavia. Degree from the faculties of Belgrade, Skopje, Subotica, Ljubljana or Zagreb.

III. Foreign qualifications accepted in the absence of certificates of higher education in science for the purpose of enrolling for courses leading to the doctorate in engineering

Argentina. Degree from the Facultad de Ingeniera y Ciencias Exactas of Buenos Aires.

Austria. Engineering degrees from the following higher educational institutions: Vienna University of Technology, Graz University of Technology, Leoben School of Mines, Vienna Agricultural College.

Belgium. Civil engineering degree from the universities of Ghent, Liège, Louvain or Brussels or the Mons School of Mines.

Canada. Engineering degree from the universities of Laval or Quebec or the École Polytechnique de Montréal.

Czechoslovakia. Degrees from the advanced technical colleges of Prague or Bratislava.

Denmark. Degree from the Danmarks Tekniske Skole, Copenhagen.

Finland. Degree from the Teknillinen Korkeakoulu, Helsinki, or the Abo Akademi, Turku.

Federal Republic of Germany. The engineering degrees issued by a Technische Hochschule.

Greece. The engineering degrees issued by the National University of Technology, Athens.

Hungary. Engineering degree (mechanical engineering, chemical engineering, civil engineering) from the Budapest Technological College (the Institut Jazf Nador Muegyetem).

India. Degree in electrical communication engineering from the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, provided that the holder was in the top quarter of the students in his year.

Engineering degree issued by Roorkee University, provided that the holder was in the top quarter of the students in his year (order dated 14 March 1952).

Iran. Engineering degree from the Faculty of Technology, Teheran (order dated 10 August 1951).

Italy. Degree from the Milan Politecnico or the Turin Politecnico.

Netherlands. Qualifications issued by the Technische Hogeschool, Delft.

Norway. Degree from the Norges Tekniske Høgskole, Trondheim.

Poland. Degree from the Warsaw Polytechnika.

Portugal. Degree from the Agricultural Institute, Lisbon.

Spain. Qualifications issued by one of the following: Escuela Especial de Ingenieros de Caminos, Canales y Puertos, Madrid; Escuela Especial de Ingenieros de Minas, Madrid; Escuela Especial de Ingenieros de Montes, Madrid.

Sweden. Degree from the Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan, Stockholm.

Switzerland. Engineering degree from the Federal Polytechnical Institute, Zürich, or the Polytechnical Institute, Lausanne.

United Kingdom. Degree of master of science in engineering from one of the following universities or colleges: Faculty of Engineering, University of Birmingham; Faculty of Engineering, University of Bristol; Faculty of Engineering, University of Cambridge; King's College, Newcastle on Tyne; Faculty of Engineering, University of Leeds; Faculty of Engineering, University of Liverpool; University College, Gower Street, London; King's College, Strand, London; Imperial College of Science and Technology, South Kensington, London; Queen Mary College, London; Municipal College of Technology, Manchester; Faculty of Engineering, University of Sheffield; University College, Nottingham; University College, Southampton; Technical College, Bradford; Technical College, Doncaster; Battersea Polytechnic, London; Borough Polytechnic, London; Woolwich Polytechnic, London; Loughborough College; Technical College, Rotherham; Wigan and District Mining and Technical College, Wigan.

United States of America. Degree of master of science in engineering from one of the universities or colleges belonging to the American Association of Universities.

Yugoslavia. Degree from the Belgrade Faculty of Technology.

IV. Foreign qualifications recognized as equivalent for the first year of an arts course and the corresponding examinations for the purpose of obtaining a university degree in arts

Certificate showing that the student has regularly attended an arts course for four semesters at a university in one of the following countries: Austria, Federal Republic of Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland (German-language universities) and Yugoslavia.

Certificate showing that the student has passed the first examination for the course in arts and philosophy or science (geographical sciences) in Belgian universities.

Certificate showing that the student has passed the first examination for the course in arts and philosophy preparatory to the doctorate of philosophy and arts in Luxembourg.

Certificate to the effect that the student has completed two years of the course or passed the first year of the course leading to: the degree of bachelor of arts at one of the universities of Great Britain; the degree of bachelor of arts at the University of Dublin; the degree of master of arts at one of the Scottish universities; the degree of *laurea* at an arts faculty of one of the Italian universities; a bachelor's degree at an arts faculty of one of the Spanish universities; a bachelor's degree at an arts faculty of one of the Portuguese universities; the degree of *kandidat* at an arts faculty of a Swedish university.

Teacher's certificate or certificate of education at the education institute of a British university.

Pass in the *forberedende prøver* (first-year preparatory course examinations) which covers three subjects at an arts faculty of a Norwegian university.

Pass in the preliminary examination in philosophy *(philosofiske prøve)* at an arts faculty of a Danish university.

Certificate showing that the student has completed three years of the bachelor of arts course and has been admitted to a senior class in an American institution accredited by one of the following regional associations of universities: Middle States Association of Colleges, New England Association of Colleges, North Central Association of Colleges, North West Association of Secondary and Higher Schools, Southern Association of Colleges, Western Association of Colleges.

Degree of bachelor of arts (literature) from one of the following Canadian universities: Montreal, Sherbrooke or Laval (Quebec).

General certificate in arts from the Faculty of Arts of the Federal University of Cameroon.

One of the degrees recognized as equivalent to the *licence* for the purpose of obtaining the State doctorate in law.

One of the degrees recognized as equivalent to a master's degree for the purpose of obtaining a State doctorate in science.

Doctor's or pharmacist's diploma entitling the holder to practise in the country of origin.

Qualifications recognized as equivalent to a university degree in arts.

V. Foreign qualifications recognized as equivalent to the university degree in arts

Degree of bachelor of arts from a university of Great Britain, Ireland, Australia, South Africa or New Zealand.

Degree of bachelor of arts from an Israel university.

Degree of bachelor of arts from a United States institution accredited by one of the following regional associations of universities: Middle States Association of Colleges, New England Association of Colleges, North Central Association of Colleges, North West Association of Secondary and Higher Schools, Southern Association of Colleges, Western Association of Colleges.

Degree of *kandidaat* from an arts faculty of a Netherlands university.

Degree of *candidat* in philosophy and literature or in science (geographical sciences) from a Belgian university.

Degree of *candidat* in philosophy and literature preparatory to the Luxembourg doctorate in philosophy and literature.

Degree of *laurea* from an arts faculty of an Italian university.

Degree taken at the end of the normal course at an arts faculty of a foreign university (master's degree, bachelor's degree, diploma of higher studies, doctorate).

Certificate entitling the holder to teach a literary subject at the secondary level, awarded by a foreign university.

Pass in the theoretical part of the secondary-school teacher's certificate obtained in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Federal Republic of Germany

by J. Fischer and Anne-Marie von Bodecker

Introduction

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany (Fundamental Law, Article 5) guarantees the entire freedom of universities in matters of research and education.

In theory, therefore, the faculties have the right to draw up their own examination regulations and to define the requirements which candidates must meet. This right is not incompatible with that of approving the corresponding degrees, which generally devolves on the Ministry of Education—in this case that of the *Land*, for the Constitution makes the *Länder* fully responsible in cultural matters.

However, as regards certain courses leading to a degree that automatically entitles the holder to practise the corresponding profession, the universities' concern to make the freest use of their prerogatives in academic matters is subordinated to the needs of the community and hence to the interest which the State takes in the training of personnel for certain professions. For instance, the State is competent to lay down the regulations governing examinations giving access to the professions of medicine (Federal Law I, p. 204, 28 March 1958), dentistry (Federal Law I, p. 221, 31 March 1952) and pharmacy (Federal Law I, p. 1057, 19 December 1952), and to those of the legal profession and secondary-school teaching.

We are not concerned with the question of which authority is competent in these matters—the federal ministries or those of the *Länder*, or again the Diets—for so far no examination regulations include a clause establishing the equivalence of foreign courses and degrees. Most of these regulations include only provisions relating to the possibility of recognizing the validity of foreign courses, provided that they are deemed 'equivalent' by the bodies competent in each case. Apart from one exception—which will be examined below—all these equivalences must be established by individual decisions made by the authorities expressly designated in the various examination regulations.[1]

1. The present report does not deal with the recognition of foreign certificates giving access to university education (*Matura* or *Reifezeugnis*). For the sake of clarity, we might mention that only the Ministry of Education of each *Land* has the power to decide on the matter, taking into account the recommendations of the Central Office for Problems Connected with Education Abroad (Zentralstelle für Ausländisches

Whatever the authority competent as regards equivalence—a university body if a university degree is involved (such as the doctorate, or *Promotion*, the master's degree, or *Magister*, and most of the diplomas), a State authority if State examinations are involved—if there is any doubt as to the academic standing of a foreign course or degree for which recognition is requested, the competent service consults the Central Office for Problems Connected with Education Abroad attached to the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education of the *Länder* of the Federal Republic of Germany, which has ample documentation on the subject. However, neither the university authorities nor the State services are bound to follow the recommendations of this office when they make their decisions.

Recognition of periods of study and degrees obtained abroad

Generally speaking, the universities of the Federal Republic of Germany are very liberal in the recognition of periods of study abroad.

Most of the regulations relating to the obtaining of the doctorate (an examination known in German as *Promotion*) include a clause to the effect that a candidate for a doctorate must have studied for at least two semesters in the faculty in which he is taking the examination. On the other hand, nothing is laid down concerning the university in which he obtained the qualifications required for admission. Consequently no qualified candidate has been known to have been refused the right to apply for a doctorate because he had studied abroad. Just after the Second World War there was a tendency for certain universities to be rather too liberal in recognizing preparatory courses taken by foreign candidates.

In order to facilitate equitable and more or less uniform evaluation of qualifications, competent professors in each discipline, representatives of the West German Rectors' Conference (Westdeutsche Rektorenkonferenz), the German University Exchange Office (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst) and the Central Office for Problems Connected with Education Abroad together drew up the 'Recommendations Relating to the Evaluation of Degrees and other Qualifications from Foreign Universities for the Purpose of Admitting Candidates for the Doctorate'. The majority of faculties in the Federal Republic of Germany follow these recommendations.

In theory the faculties establish their own regulations for university examinations for a diploma or the master's degree. They generally obtain the approval of the Minister of Education. In order to bring about some

Bildungswesen), attached to the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education of the *Länder* of the Federal Republic of Germany (Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland). Ministers of education are bound to comply with the provisions of the European Convention on the Equivalence of Diplomas Leading to Admission to Universities (which convention was ratified by the Federal Republic on 3 March 1955) and in some cases with the provisions of one or more cultural agreements including clauses governing mutual recognition of diplomas leading to admission to universities (*Reifezeugnis*).

uniformity in these regulations the West German Rectors' Conference and the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education set up a joint commission to study regulations governing curricula and examinations, with special committees to draw up general regulations (*Rahmenordnungen*) which provide the faculties with guide-lines for the elaboration of their individual regulations.

In order to define the terms of reference of these special committees and lay down their procedure with a view to co-ordinating the various sets of regulations, a pamphlet was brought out dealing in particular with the principles to be followed in recognizing certain courses of study and certain qualifications required elsewhere.[1] The pamphlet stresses the importance of making it as clear as possible in the general regulations that the recognition of courses of study abroad should be compulsory. However it is emphasized that examination regulations cannot be aimed at deciding which foreign institutions are to be regarded as 'equivalent'. Decisions can only be made on an individual basis.

For instance, the general regulations concerning the examination for the master's degree, which is taken at a faculty of arts, stipulate that 'Studies undertaken at another university, German or foreign, which is recognized as being of equivalent academic standard, may be fully accepted on the proposal of the professor competent for the discipline concerned'.

Information relating to the equivalences contained in the various draft regulations may be found in a list drawn up in November 1960. Since then a number of other general regulations have been issued.

The procedure for establishing equivalences varies considerably according to the examination regulations and the university concerned. The authority responsible for the decision is, as the case may be: the chairman of the examining commission; the examining commission itself; the examinations service; the faculty; or the Ministry of Education.

The various methods actually applied are summed up in a table.[2]

The procedure followed by the Berlin University of Technology is described in detail.[3] It is similar to that followed by other universities.

Bilateral and multilateral conventions and agreements

The only existing multilateral conventions concerning the mutual recognition of university degrees are the two conventions of the Council of Europe: the European Convention on the Academic Recognition of University Qualifications, 14 December 1959, which has not yet been ratified by the Federal

1. Die Kommission für Prüfungs- und Studienordnungen, *Darstellung und Dokumentation,* Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder und der Westdeutsche Rektorenkonferenz, 1963.
2. Westdeutsche Rektorenkonferenz, *Empfehlungen, Entschliessungen und Nachrichten vom Präsidenten mitgeteilt,* Schwarze Hefte, 1961 (Stücke 123-42/1961; Document 130/1961).
3. ibid., Document 129/1961.

Republic of Germany; and the European Convention dealing with the equivalence of periods of university study, 15 December 1956, which was ratified by the Federal Republic on 8 December 1964.

Any practical regulations on equivalence contained in these two conventions already existed in the examination regulations which had previously been issued.

Bilateral agreements have been concluded recently with France. Others are under consideration.

Actually these are not really bilateral conventions, but unilateral declarations of one or the other party based on expert opinions, which are reached at the bilateral level.

With regard to the details of these agreements, the following remarks are pertinent. On the basis of a report prepared by the Secretariat of the West German Rectors' Conference,[1] small working groups were set up for each discipline by the Franco-German Rectors' Conference. These working groups, each of which comprised an expert from France and an expert from the Federal Republic of Germany, compared the curricula in force in the two countries and made proposals with a view to the mutual recognition of periods of study and qualifications obtained in each subject.

The first subjects thus compared were Classical, Romance and Germanic philology. The experts' opinions were submitted to the professors of the corresponding faculties in both countries and, after amendments had been made so as to take account of the objections raised by the professors, they were adopted by the Franco-German Rectors' Conference and communicated to the competent authorities in both countries so that they might take the necessary steps. A series of ministerial decrees were thus published in France, while in the Federal Republic of Germany the ministries of education adopted a resolution in which they undertook to apply the proposals with regard to equivalences within their sphere of competence (especially in the case of examinations for a teaching qualification) and to recommend that universities for which they were responsible should apply the proposals to purely university examinations.

It is not yet possible to draw up a complete list of those equivalences which have already been embodied in the various examination regulations. The federal structure of the Federal Republic of Germany and the large measure of autonomy enjoyed by the faculties in respect of examinations make progress slow.

The experts' findings with regard to physics, chemistry and biology are already available, but the expert committees dealing with economics, agriculture and a number of technological disciplines have not yet completed their research.

Similar studies aimed at defining equivalences in the fields of Romance, Germanic and Classical philology, medicine, electronics and engineering have been begun, in conjunction with the Italian Rectors' Conference.

1. ibid., Document 126/1961.

A written agreement has been made between the Chairman of the Education Ministers' Conference and the Chairman of the West German Rectors' Conference under which equivalence agreements with foreign countries cannot be concluded until the rectors' conference has examined the 'real scientific content of the courses or qualifications in question'.

In conclusion, the authors of this study wish to emphasize that, in their experience, equivalences between university systems as different as those of the European countries can only be established on a bilateral basis, as was the case with the agreements between France and the Federal Republic of Germany. However, they think that if a number of bilateral agreements are made it will very likely be possible to come to some multilateral form of control in the long run.

The spheres of competence of State bodies have been adequately described above.

Information on the provisions of the regulations governing State examinations concerning recognition in the Federal Republic of Germany of semesters of study abroad is given in a list drawn up in 1958.[1]

1. ibid., Document 133/1961.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

by E. M. Sergeev

Introduction

The Soviet doctrine of international law unequivocally recognizes the fact that, although there are two different social and economic systems and two separate world markets, which came into being after the Second World War, yet present-day international relations, involving struggle and co-operation between States belonging to the two systems, should be governed by the same universally recognized standards of international law, which are binding on all those to whom international law applies, irrespective of the system to which they belong.

The international co-operation of States in culture, science and technology is an important aspect of the peaceful coexistence of States. Life itself makes international co-operation in culture, science and technology necessary, especially when problems of common interest to all peoples have to be solved.

Higher and secondary specialized education is developing as science and technology progress, and the question of assessing the qualifications of specialists is becoming extremely important, since it is one of the conditions for the development of international co-operation.

Increasing scientific and technological co-operation between States, technological progress and the fact that the different nations have their own ways and means of training specialists—all this makes it essential, particularly in the case of States which have recently gained their independence, to decide how to assess, from the standpoint of international law, the standard of diplomas certifying that a specialist has obtained a particular qualification.

All these factors were taken as a basis by the Soviet Government, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education and the universities, when considering questions relating to the equivalence of diplomas and degrees.

In the Soviet Union it was suggested that the term *nostrifikacija* should be introduced, to mean recognizing a foreign specialist, scientific or pedagogical qualification, or giving it equivalent status with a Soviet qualification in accordance with an international convention or agreement signed, on behalf of the State, by governmental or public administrative bodies which issue certificates to trained personnel, with due regard to national standards in

the various branches of science and technology and the requirements prescribed in each country for obtaining such qualifications.

The question of the equivalence of diplomas and degrees is not of purely present-day interest; it has its own history, in the light of which the present state of the problem should be considered.

Methods of etablishing equivalences

In Russia, the decision as to whether degrees and diplomas conferred by European universities should be recognized was taken in the early days by the Council of the Ecclesiastical Academy, and later by the councils of the universities and technological institutions and by the Ministry of Education.[1]

In the period following the Great October Socialist Revolution higher educational establishments in the Russian Federation were subject to the 'Regulations for Institutions of Highêr Education', adopted by the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic on 3 June 1922. In virtue of these regulations, decisions as to the equivalence of foreign qualifications were taken by the council of the institution of higher education and ratified by the Central Bureau for Professional Training of the People's Commissariat for Education,[2] the range of courses attended and completed abroad being taken into account, and then a certificate was issued attesting that the bearer had received a higher education and indicating his particular subject of study.

Questions relating to the equivalence of foreign diplomas came within the competence of the councils of higher-education establishments, since study abroad was an important part of the training of specialist personnel and of post-graduate scientific work.

Decisions as to the validity of certificates and the recognition of those from other countries awarded to scientists and teachers in the Union republics and in the Soviet Union as a whole were taken by the State Academic Council, the qualifications commissions, the People's Commissariats for Education in the Union republics and the Supreme Commission on Certificates, which dealt with the recognition of certificates issued by foreign institutions.

After the introduction of a system for the recognition of a specialized qualification for scientists and teachers, persons holding a foreign diploma or degree were given permission to apply to the Supreme Commission on Certificates of the All-Union Committee on Higher Technical Education, the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences or the People's Commissariat for Education of one of the Union republics or of the U.S.S.R., requesting that they

1. *Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov Rosijskoj Imperii* (Collected Laws of the Russian Empire), Vol. 27, No. 2055, p. 394, 1802.
2. *Sobranie Uzakonenij i Rasporjaženij Raboče-Kresťjanskogo Praviteľstva RSFSR* (Collected Legislation and Resolutions of the Workers' and Peasants' Government of the R.S.F.S.R.), 1922, Part I, No. 1.

should receive the corresponding qualification or degree in the Soviet Union without having to defend a thesis.

On 20 March 1937, a decree 'On Academic Degrees and Qualifications' was promulgated by the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., and after this the Supreme Commission on Certificates adopted a number of decisions which gave people who had obtained a degree abroad the right to apply to the council competent to authorize persons to defend a thesis, requesting that they be awarded a degree without having to defend a thesis. The council decided which degree was to be awarded by ascertaining what scientific studies the applicant had carried out. Nationals of foreign States wishing to defend a thesis with a view to obtaining a degree could do so under the usual conditions, provided that they had received permission to enter the Soviet Union.

The question of recognizing foreign degrees and diplomas held by scientific workers in higher-education establishments and scientific institutes as being the equivalent of those conferred in the Soviet Union came up again in 1940.

The Presidium of the Supreme Commission on Certificates referred questions concerning the recognition of qualifications gained by such workers to expert commissions for consideration, and also instructed the secretariat to prepare draft regulations as to the procedure for the recognition of degrees and other qualifications held by workers attending higher-education establishments in the western regions of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. As a result, it became the practice to require that degrees and other qualifications held by the professors and teaching staff of higher-education establishments in those regions should be officially recognized, and for this purpose the director of each institute had to transmit to the Supreme Commission on Certificates the records and papers of those instructors whose qualifications, in his opinion, entitled them to be granted official recognition.

After the Second World War the Soviet Government granted permission for former Russian nationals holding foreign citizenship to return to the Soviet Union if they so wished. Consequently, from 1946 onwards the question of the official recognition of academic qualifications awarded to workers by foreign institutes came to the fore once more. All sorts of certificates were being produced in lieu of the standard degrees and diplomas, and a slightly different method of dealing with the problem was therefore adopted. The question whether a foreign diploma was the equivalent of the Soviet diploma was discussed by the council of the institute or university at which the person concerned was working, and was decided finally by the Supreme Commission on Certificates.

Official recognition of a foreign qualification was granted by the council of the scientific institution or higher-education establishment, which took into account the course the student had taken abroad. Persons applying for the official recognition of a diploma were required to fill in a form and to produce their higher-education certificate and an extract from the examination register. The council took into consideration the number of hours they

had spent on lectures and practical work. Official recognition had to be obtained for all diplomas, degrees and other qualifications conferred by higher-education establishments in other countries.

In recent years large numbers of foreigners have been arriving in the Soviet Union to take higher-education courses and to prepare post-graduate and doctoral theses. The criteria for the equivalence of diplomas, degrees and other academic qualifications have therefore had to be very carefully defined.

It was decided that the best method was to assess the academic standard reached, which provides a basis for an objective evaluation of a student's abilities and to a certain extent shows how far he has mastered scientific research methods.

Assessment of academic standards reached in different countries

Determining academic standards is a highly complex matter. Various aspects of the question have to be carefully investigated—for example, the content of the course in educational institutions of the same type in different countries—and the length of the course, the level of the diploma and the student's practical ability must be taken into account. For this reason it was thought advisable first to try to determine what general basic information should be considered in judging the actual standard of education in different countries, disregarding non-essential details. It was decided that the following points should be taken into account: the subjects studied in an educational institution of a particular type (and the number of hours of study); the amount of practical work the student has done and his industrial experience; and the number of tests and examinations he has taken and the subjects in which he has been examined.

Of course, the organization of the work of higher-education establishments differs from one country to another, and for this reason it was thought advisable to confine the comparison of diplomas and degrees to certain countries whose educational systems will be familiar to most readers. The countries chosen were the United States of America (together with Japan), the United Kingdom and Eastern Germany.

We now propose to compare the systems of higher education and training for degrees and diplomas in these countries with the system followed in the Soviet Union.

United States of America

In the United States of America a person who completes a four-year course of study in a university or other higher-education establishment is awarded the degree of bachelor of arts (in the case of the humanities) or bachelor of science (in the case of the natural sciences and technological subjects). The

granting of this degree alone serves as evidence that a person has received a higher education.

In most institutions of higher education in the Soviet Union the course which leads to the diploma of higher education (*diplom ob okončanii vyššego učebnogo zavedenija*) is of five years' duration—sometimes even longer. Only teacher-training institutes still have a four-year course.

Thus, even persons who have completed a course of only four years' duration in institutions of higher education in the Soviet Union have attained the same level as those who have completed a course at institutions of higher education in the United States. The list of subjects on the curriculum, the content of these subjects and the number of tests and examinations taken, support this view.

Universities, independent colleges and institutes in the United States have schools providing courses leading to higher academic degrees. Students at these schools undertake advanced studies; they specialize in a particular subject, narrowing down but at the same time deepening their field of study, and are trained for scientific research, design or other industrial work, or for teaching. These schools usually admit persons who have already had a higher education and hold the degree of bachelor of science. Graduates of university colleges which teach general theoretical subjects and the humanities and graduates of technical institutes are also admitted.

To obtain the master's degree, the student must hold the bachelor's degree and must train for a further period of one or two years, during which he attends lectures, participates in seminars, does independent research and carries out individual studies under the direct supervision of the instructors. Students take examinations in all subjects included in the curriculum and also a general master's examination. The requirements for the master's examinations are not standardized throughout the United States; each institution of higher education has its own requirements.

In order to obtain a master's degree the student must submit a thesis, in addition to taking examinations. The main purpose of this is to train the future scientist in assembling and handling his material, analysing it and drawing general conclusions from it. Theses are submitted in writing, and are assessed by a special board. The master's degree is conferred on students whose theses have been approved. Persons who hold the master's degree and who have done outstanding work are appointed to teaching posts in institutions of higher education.

In universities, technical and medical institutions of higher education and other institutes in the Soviet Union the course is of the same length as the course leading to the master's degree in the United States.

In the fifth and sixth years students in the U.S.S.R. devote a fixed amount of time to attending lectures and participating in seminars and to independent research, which is conducted under the supervision of the instructor of the department in which they are specializing. The results of each student's individual research are embodied in his diploma thesis or diploma project, which corresponds in range and content to the thesis submitted in the

United States for the master's degree, though some diploma theses are weightier.

Most of the theses prepared by students in the Faculty of Chemistry of the M. V. Lomonosov Moscow State University are published immediately after completion; for example: in 1964, 265 students graduated from the Faculty of Chemistry of the Moscow State University. The diploma theses of 65 per cent of these were accepted for publication in the same year. In 1965, 289 students graduated from the same faculty, and 75 per cent of their diploma theses were accepted for publication in the same year. We emphasize the year of publication of theses because, as a rule, the rest are published some time later, after work on certain points has been completed. Thus the vast majority of the diploma theses prepared in the Faculty of Chemistry are published. Many of the diploma theses submitted in the other faculties of the Moscow State University and in other institutions of higher education in the U.S.S.R. are also published, because they are of general scientific interest.

Many other diploma theses and diploma projects are of a practical nature, i.e. they examine and solve problems which are not merely academic in nature, but have been selected by the department or by individual professors in view of the needs of the national economy or for the further development of science and culture.

Diploma theses or diploma projects are defended before a State examining board appointed by the Minister of Higher Education. The ministry lays down requirements for all diploma theses and diploma projects submitted in the Soviet Union. They are uniform throughout the country, and quite exacting.

The comparison we have made shows that specialists in the United States and those in the Soviet Union study for the same period (five or six years), have to satisfy more or less the same requirements and reach more or less the same standard. The only difference is that in the United States there is an intermediate stage, the conferring of the degree of bachelor of science after four years' study, while no such intermediate stage exists in the Soviet Union. This leads us to think that graduates of universities, technical institutions of higher education and medical, agricultural and other institutes in the Soviet Union reach the same standard as specialists who have obtained a master's degree in the United States.

The first academic degree in the Soviet Union is the degree of candidate of science (*kandidat nauk*), which is granted in a specific subject. It may be obtained, for instance, in technical sciences, biological sciences, philosophy, medical sciences, agricultural sciences, and so on.

The requirements for the degree of *kandidat* are more or less uniform. During the three- or four-year course, the student, who has already received a higher education and is doing post-graduate study, must sit three examinations, one in his own special subject, one in philosophy and one in a foreign language. The standard of these examinations is high. For instance, the post-graduate student must show that he knows as much about the various aspects

of his special study as does a qualified instructor at an institute of higher education. While he is preparing for the examinations for the degree of *kandidat* and taking them, he also works on his thesis, which must solve some topical problem of theoretical and practical significance.

Students continue to work on their theses throughout the three or four years of the post-graduate course. As a rule, their research in the subject of their thesis follows on from previous research which they did before entering upon post-graduate studies, while working in industry or in a scientific research institute or while preparing a diploma thesis and doing independent scientific research at an institute of higher education.

Theses are defended in public. There are two official opponents, and the official report from the organization to which the thesis is sent for assessment is available.

The principal conclusions reached in the thesis must be published in widely accessible and well-known scientific periodicals. In fact, a thesis usually provides material for several articles, sometimes as many as ten or even more. Theses for the degree of *kandidat* are prepared not only in the course of post-graduate studies but, in a number of cases, independently by persons who have had considerable experience of industrial and research work and have had a large number of articles published. Such persons also sit the examinations for the degree of *kandidat*.

These requirements correspond more or less to those for the degree of doctor of science in the United States.

In the United States, of course, the period of preparation for the degree of doctor of science varies from one or two years (for a person holding the master's degree) to between three and five years (for a person with the bachelor's degree)—sometimes longer.

The higher degree most commonly conferred in the United States is that of doctor of philosophy. This degree was taken over from the medieval universities before exact or natural sciences in the modern sense of the term were studied, and when philosophy was thought of as a general science. Accordingly, in the United States the degree of doctor of philosophy is now conferred for scientific theses of a general nature dealing with the exact sciences as well as with the humanities.

There are doctorates of engineering, education, medicine, commerce, law and so on, as well as the degree of doctor of philosophy. The training provided, therefore, is highly specialized.

This is similar to the Soviet system for the award of the degree of *kandidat* of science. A doctor of science in the United States is required to carry out original scientific research. His thesis must give evidence of a sound general knowledge of his branch of science, and he must make a special study of certain aspects of his subject, and show originality in organizing and conducting research in the subject of his thesis.

Doctoral theses are printed either wholly or in part. Some institutions of higher education in the United States accept typed or microfilmed doctoral theses.

Students preparing doctoral theses sit two examinations, as post-graduate students in the Soviet Union sit three, one in their major subject and the other in a subsidiary subject. They must give evidence of a broad general knowledge of their subject and the ability to interpret the results of their observations.

It will be seen that the requirements for doctoral theses and for the degree of doctor of science in the United States correspond to a great extent to the requirements for the *kandidat* theses and for the degree of *kandidat* of science in the Soviet Union. Therefore we have concluded that the degree of *kandidat* of science awarded in the Soviet Union is the equivalent of the degree of doctor of science conferred in the United States.

On the basis of analyses carried out in the Soviet Union on a number of occasions by various specialists, the conclusion has been reached that persons holding the degree of bachelor of arts or bachelor of science in the United States know less about their subject and are not so highly trained as graduates of universities, higher technical institutes and similar establishments in the U.S.S.R. The graduates of all these institutions of higher education have reached a level of training and scientific knowledge similar to that of specialists who obtain the degree of master of science in the United States. The Soviet degree of *kandidat* of science is equivalent to the United States degree of doctor of science.

The second academic degree in the Soviet Union—the degree of doctor of science—is evidence of much greater scientific knowledge and ability on the part of the persons receiving it than the degree of doctor of science in the United States. There is, in fact, no similar degree in the United States.

Japan. The American higher-education system has been adopted in a number of countries, in most of the universities in Japan for instance. The author of this report has had an opportunity to acquaint himself with the organization of higher education in a number of State and private universities in Japan. He was particularly interested in the training of geologists.

To give some idea of the situation, we shall compare the training of geologists in the State University of Kyoto and in the Moscow State University.

In the State University of Kyoto, as in most Japanese universities, first- and second-year students take general educational subjects. Lectures on geology and the study of the various branches of geology begin in the third year and continue in the fourth year. Students take a two-year course in the main branches of geology: mineralogy, petrography, physical geology, palaeontology, stratigraphy and a few others. They do practical work every Saturday, a total of about twenty-five days a year, and they also have a ten-day period of practical work. Undergraduates who complete the four-year course receive the degree of bachelor.

In the Moscow State University the study of the various branches of geology begins in the first year and proceeds concurrently with the study

of general educational subjects, such as advanced mathematics, physics, chemistry, philosophy and so on.

In the five-year geology course, the following branches of geology are studied and students are examined in them: general geology; palaeontology; historical geology; geology of the U.S.S.R.; geology of Quaternary deposits; geomorphology; crystallography and crystallochemistry; mineralogy; petrography; lithology; geological mapping; geophysics; geochemistry; hydrogeology; geological surveying; useful minerals; prospecting for useful minerals; geotectonics; the organization and planning of geological surveying operations; and a few other subjects.

The practical work done by undergraduates covers a period of eighteen weeks, i.e. 108 working days. In addition they do practical training in industry for a total of twenty-six weeks, i.e. 156 working days. Thus they have nearly ten months' practical work and industrial training.

Students defend their diploma thesis before a State examining board, which also conducts the examinations. Their scientific knowledge and training and the original practical work they do are such that the standard attained by graduates of the Moscow State University may be compared with that of specialists who obtain the degree of master of science in the University of Kyoto.

The course leading to the degree of master of science in the State University of Kyoto is of six years' duration. We believe that geology students of the Moscow State University reach the same level of training and knowledge in five years. This is because general educational subjects in the Moscow State University are studied concurrently with special subjects. The first two years of the course are not spent in studying general educational subjects only.

The general educational subjects studied in the Moscow State University are those that a future specialist in geology requires. More general subjects, such as literature, history and so on, are taken in the State University of Kyoto, thereby making the course longer.

The post-graduate course for the degree of *kandidat* of geological and mineralogical sciences in the Soviet Union is of three years' duration. As a rule, post-graduate courses are taken by students who have already acquired the basic material for a thesis, by working in one of the geological organizations or by doing independent research work at a university.

The time required for the preparation of a doctoral thesis in the State University of Kyoto is three years, and students who hold the master's degree can prepare a thesis, irrespective of the length of time they have spent in industry.

The research done by Hakawa may be cited as an instance of a doctoral thesis in geology. The subject of his thesis was the history of the geological evolution of Lake Biwa (near Kyoto) between the Neocene period and the present time. It contained a detailed study of recent deposits in this lake and the residue of marine and fresh-water fauna they contain. On the basis of his investigations Hakawa came to the conclusion that Lake Biwa was once

joined to a marine basin, and that at a certain time this link was broken, owing to tectonic movements of the earth's crust.

This conclusion is of purely local interest. In the Soviet Union, a thesis on such a subject could never be considered for the degree of doctor of science. Its content is no more than would be required for a thesis for the degree of *kandidat*. This analysis of an actual case clearly shows that students who obtain the degree of master of science in Japanese State universities, which follow the American system, can be placed on the same footing as graduates of Soviet universities, while specialists obtaining the degree of doctor of science can be compared to Soviet specialists who have obtained the degree of *kandidat* of science.

Thus the conclusion that was reached when comparing the standard of diplomas and degrees conferred in the Soviet Union with the standard of those conferred in the United States also holds good for countries which follow the American system of higher education.

United Kingdom

Because there is no completely unified system for the training of scientific workers in the United Kingdom, it is difficult to make a satisfactory, detailed comparison of the United Kingdom system and the Soviet system. The requirements for persons graduating from universities and other institutions of higher education in the United Kingdom vary according to the constitution and traditions of each institution of higher education.

The first academic degree, that of bachelor of science or bachelor of arts, is conferred after the student has passed specialized examinations. Persons holding this degree may proceed, after further study, to the degrees of master and doctor. As a rule the degree taken after the bachelor's degree is that of master of science or master of arts.

The conditions and procedure for obtaining a master's degree vary from one educational institution to another. In the University of Cambridge, for instance, the degree of master of science is conferred on persons who have been authorized to carry out scientific research work, have worked not less than two years in this field and have submitted a thesis.

In the University of Sheffield the degrees of master of science, master of arts, master of law, master of science in engineering and so on are granted to those who, besides having completed a five-year university course, have also completed at least one year's additional study and submitted a thesis approved by the faculty and who have, as a rule, passed an oral examination in their special subject.

To obtain the master's degree in the University of Reading, a student must complete two years of preparation and submit a thesis.

In the University of Nottingham the period of preparation for the master's degree is one year for graduates of that university and two years for graduates of other universities.

The University of Oxford and the Scottish universities issue a higher degree—the bachelor of philosophy.

Enough examples have been given to show that it is impossible to make an accurate comparison of diplomas and degrees conferred by British universities with those conferred in the Soviet Union, for the purpose of establishing equivalences.

It may be that such accuracy is not necessary anyway. What is important is to determine the general standard of scientific knowledge attained by graduates of British and Soviet universities. This may be described as follows.

In most British universities, the master's thesis is predominantly academic in nature, and the scientific research done by students in preparing it can be described as academic research work—the kind of work usually done by students in the senior years of the course in Soviet universities and other institutions of higher education. For instance, in the fourth and fifth years of the Faculty of Physics, the Faculty of Mechanics and Mathematics and other faculties of the Moscow State University, a student chooses from a large number of specialized courses and seminars and conducts independent academic research work in the subjects he studies in these courses.

In the Physics Faculty there are 128 such specialized courses, varying in duration from sixteen to 102 hours. In the Faculty of Mechanics and Mathematics the number of specialized courses and seminars in each department varies from ten to twenty-seven. In this faculty, fourth- and fifth-year students have compulsory classes occupying from two to six hours a week, all the rest of their time being spent on the study of the special subjects they have chosen.

Thus senior students at the Moscow State University do a considerable amount of independent research work. Students in other institutions of higher education in the Soviet Union also do independent research work, but on a somewhat smaller scale.

Bearing this in mind, if the requirements for diploma theses in the Soviet Union are compared with those for master's theses in the United Kingdom, the conclusion reached is that the standard of scientific knowledge reached by graduates of Soviet institutions of higher education is equivalent to that of students who obtain the degree of master of science in the United Kingdom.

In the United Kingdom the degree following the master's degree is that of doctor. The highest degrees in the United Kingdom (though not in the United States) are those of doctor of science and doctor of letters, which are conferred on persons holding a master's degree who have satisfied a number of stringent conditions, and that of doctor of philosophy. The latter degree is conferred on graduates of British or foreign universities who have done advanced study and carried out research work for a period of two or three years. In the University of London, for instance, the course lasts two years (in the case of full-time students) or four years (in the case of part-time students) after graduation from a university. Any British university can confer the degree of doctor of philosophy. On completion of his study the applicant

for this degree submits his thesis to a board of specialists and is examined orally on it. The requirements for these oral examinations are less exacting than those for the public defence of a thesis for the degree of *kandidat* in the U.S.S.R.

Comparison of the number of examinations and of the requirements for theses warrants the conclusion that the degree of doctor of philosophy conferred in the United Kingdom is equivalent to the degree of *kandidat* of science conferred in the Soviet Union. In some cases, the degree of *kandidat* of science may be of a somewhat higher standard than the degree of doctor of philosophy, and the degrees of doctor of science and doctor of letters conferred in the United Kingdom may be of a slightly higher standard than the degree of *kandidat* of science conferred in the Soviet Union.

The United Kingdom has no academic degree analogous to the degree of doctor of science conferred in the Soviet Union.

Eastern Germany

The system for the training of scientific workers in Eastern Germany has certain special features; it reflects the traditions which have become established in the German *Hochschule*.

The universities train specialists in various branches of knowledge. Technical institutions of higher education train certificated engineers, who obtain their diploma after two years' work in industry. Graduates of secondary specialized educational institutions receive a certificate in a particular subject. Engineering graduates of a secondary technical institute, for instance, receive an engineer's certificate, as distinct from a certificated engineer's diploma, which is conferred on graduates of a higher technical institute.

Persons who have received a higher education are accepted for post-graduate studies either immediately after graduation from an institute of higher education or after a period of industrial employment. Those who have completed post-graduate studies are required to sit examinations in the subjects prescribed by the director. There is no official programme of preparation for the examinations, nor is the time to be spent in preparing a thesis stipulated; it varies from three to five years.

When a thesis has been submitted, a date is fixed for its public defence. It is not compulsory to have articles on the material contained in the thesis published, but an author's abstract is circulated to research institutes, industrial firms and leading specialists.

The degree of doctor of science is conferred on persons who defend their thesis successfully.

The degree of doctor of natural philosophy is conferred for a thesis in natural science, the degree of doctor of philosophy for a thesis in arts, and the degree of doctor of engineering for a thesis in technological subjects. The academic council assigns each doctoral thesis to one of the following four categories: excellent, good, satisfactory and fair.

The next academic degree in Eastern Germany is the *Habilitation*, which is conferred for the solution of a major scientific problem of general applicability.

Comparison of the requirements in institutions of higher education in Eastern Germany, the time taken to prepare doctoral theses and the requirements regarding the content and defence of theses shows that the system for the training of scientists in Eastern Germany is similar to the system for the training of scientists in the Soviet Union. It can be said that the degree of *kandidat* of science in the Soviet Union is equivalent to the first doctoral degrees conferred by the academic councils of the institutions of higher education in Eastern Germany.

The degree of doctor of science in the Soviet Union corresponds to the degree of *Habilitation* in Eastern Germany.

Internal regulations

The basic regulations for the training of scientists in the Soviet Union and in a number of other countries have been compared in some detail. An attempt has been made to show how Soviet universities and government bodies who have studied the subject have arrived at the opinion that the basis for establishing equivalences between diplomas and degrees should be a comparison of the fundamental principles, governing the organization of the work of higher-education institutions, which determine the level of scientific knowledge attained by graduates.

On the basis of an analysis and comparison of all the material submitted to the Ministry of Higher Education by universities engaged in teaching foreign nationals, the Minister of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education of the U.S.S.R. issued an order (No. 6, 7 January 1964) ratifying the regulations for foreign nationals studying in higher and secondary specialized educational institutions and scientific institutes of the U.S.S.R. Paragraphs 15 and 18 of these regulations are the two most important paragraphs dealing with the official recognition of foreign diplomas. Paragraph 15 guarantees foreign students the same rights as are enjoyed by Soviet nationals graduating from an institution of higher education. It reads:

> Any student who has satisfied all the requirements of the curriculum and syllabus shall be entitled to defend a diploma project [thesis] or sit for State examinations.
>
> Any student who has passed the State examinations or successfully defended a diploma project [thesis] shall, at the discretion of the State examining board, be recognized as having qualified in the subject in which he has specialized and shall be awarded a diploma conforming to the prescribed model and established in two languages (Russian and a foreign language) accompanied, at the graduate's request, by an appendix listing the subjects studied and indicating the examination marks obtained in each one.
>
> Graduates of an institution of higher education shall be awarded a badge, as well as the diploma.

At the discretion of the council of the institution of higher education the most distinguished students shall be awarded a diploma with distinction in accordance with the prescribed procedure.

Paragraph 18 contains the basic principles for the official recognition of diplomas. These principles govern the establishment of equivalences between diplomas issued by educational institutions of the Soviet Union and those issued by educational institutions of the United States of America.

Bilateral and multilateral conventions and agreements

Experience has shown that the Soviet Union's approach to questions concerning the establishment of equivalences between diplomas and degrees is acceptable to the Socialist States. This is clear, too, from international conventions and agreements respecting the reciprocal training of specialized personnel with a secondary technical or higher education and of scientists.

The first agreement of this kind was that concluded on 26 April 1956 between the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Eastern Germany respecting the exchange of post-graduate students and undergraduates for the purpose of studying in universities, institutions of higher education and scientific-research institutes of these States. This agreement specifically mentions the recognition of specialized qualifications for university staff, in accordance with the national legislation of each State. This was followed by the signature on 17 October 1957 of an agreement between the governments of the U.S.S.R. and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic respecting the exchange of undergraduates and post-graduate students for the purposes of study in institutions of higher education and scientific research institutes. Similar agreements have been concluded between all the People's Democracies.

When the cultural agreement between the U.S.S.R. and the Italian Republic was concluded the question of the official recognition of foreign qualifications was not settled, but both parties stated that they were studying conditions on the basis of which they could recognize the equivalence of diplomas and certificates issued or conferred by universities or other institutions of higher education.[1] This confirmed the desirability and indeed necessity of finding methods whereby a country which is a party to the European Convention on the Equivalence of Diplomas (Italy) and a country which has established the equivalence of degrees and diplomas with the Socialist States (the U.S.S.R.) could recognize each other's degrees and diplomas.

The question of the equivalence of diplomas and degrees has become so pressing that it cannot be put off any longer, particularly since the methods to be used in the official recognition of degrees are now more or less clear.

1. *Vedomosti Verhovnogo Soveta SSSR* (Records of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.), No. 16, 19 April 1962.

United Kingdom

by A. A. Bath

Introduction

In so far as this study is concerned with the recognition of qualifications in connexion with admission to university courses of study or research, the questions arising are, in the case of the United Kingdom, matters for the universities as distinct from government.

It should perhaps be stated at the outset that it is not the practice of United Kingdom universities to grant 'recognition' *simpliciter* to any academic qualifications. The point is elaborated in what follows, but the essence of it is that universities only give consideration to such qualifications in relation to specific applications for admission. In this context, the need to 'establish equivalences' between academic qualifications gained in the United Kingdom and those gained abroad arises essentially at two levels. The first relates to students from abroad seeking to enter British universities to follow courses leading to a first degree or diploma, i.e. at the undergraduate level. The second relates to those seeking to enter upon advanced work, by way either of research or of post-graduate study, leading to a higher degree or diploma. The following statement indicates the position at both such levels.

University admission requirements for first-degree courses

The universities of the United Kingdom are all autonomous bodies, generally incorporated by Royal Charter, and each university is free to determine the nature and level of academic attainment to be required from candidates, whether from the United Kingdom or from abroad, for admission to the courses of study which it provides. In order to qualify for admission to a first-degree course a student must have passed an examination or examinations which satisfy the minimum academic requirements for matriculation into the university concerned. Universities do not hold a separate matriculation examination but rely normally upon the results of examinations conducted, by a number of approved examining bodies, for the General Certificate of Education (GCE) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and for the Scottish Certificate of Education in Scotland. Such minimum entrance requirements are normally prescribed in terms of the number of subjects to be passed (from an approved list) and the level (in England and Wales 'ordinary' or 'advanced') at which the passes must be obtained. They vary

to some extent from university to university. The satisfying of minimum entrance requirements, however, does not, for any university, carry with it a right of entry. It is a general academic prerequisite; whether a person who has satisfied these minimum requirements is admitted depends on a number of factors, including the following:

1. Many faculties and departments require that particular subjects shall have been included in the qualifying examinations, and may require that such passes shall have been at 'advanced' level (these constitute the 'course' requirements as distinct from the matriculation or 'general' requirements for entry).
2. The limitation on the number of university places available may result in competition between candidates for entrance, which may raise the effective standard of attainment necessary for admission to any particular course above that formally prescribed.

In the context of the foregoing pattern of entrance requirements, there are necessarily complications in any attempt at treatment of equivalences of foreign qualifications in relation to admission to a first-degree course. The general position as regards the matriculation or 'general' requirement for entrance is, however, indicated below. The eligibility for matriculation of candidates educated outside the United Kingdom is a matter wholly within the discretion of each individual university (except that in certain cases there exists a single matriculating authority covering a group of universities—namely, the Joint Matriculation Board in the case of the universities of Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield, and the Scottish Universities Entrance Board in the case of the universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St. Andrews). Fully detailed information in respect of each university can only be obtained from the official publications of the universities concerned, but a careful summary of these requirements is contained in Appendix III of the *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook* (p. 1815-75 of the 1965 edition and p. 2125-203 of the 1966 edition).

It will be seen from this publication that the conditions on which examination certificates other than those of the GCE are acceptable for matriculation purposes are described in various forms. The summary position is indicated in the introductory note as follows:

> Various other qualifications are specified by different universities as being acceptable, under certain conditions, for admission purposes. . . . Passes in the matriculation examinations of overseas universities and the school leaving examinations of overseas countries would also normally be accepted, provided a satisfactory standard in English has been achieved. The University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate conducts examinations specially for overseas candidates, and awards an Oversea School Certificate and an Oversea Higher School Certificate. Passes in these examinations are normally accepted as equivalent to passes in GCE examinations, passes at principal standard in the Higher School Certificate counting as GCE passes at advanced level, and credits in the School Certificate or passes at subsidiary standard in the Higher School Certificate counting as GCE passes at ordinary level.

The regulations in respect of individual universities, however, vary. Some make only a general statement, as that of Bristol for example, which follows a list of the approved examination qualifications (including 'a degree of a United Kingdom or other approved university') with the paragraph:

> The following may be declared eligible for admission: (a) a candidate educated elsewhere than in United Kingdom on his submitting sufficient evidence of having passed elsewhere examinations equal to any of those above and of ability to follow instruction given in English.
> *Note.*—It is not the university's practice to give specific recognition of qualifications awarded in other countries. The requirement above makes it possible to admit candidates who may be recommended by a department of the university for admission. . . .

Others make somewhat more specific statements—for example, Essex, where the regulations indicate that the university's general entrance requirements may be satisfied *inter alia* by 'a degree of another university in the United Kingdom and of such other universities as may be approved for this purpose'—and include also such statements as:

> The following may be declared eligible for selection for admission by the senate of the university on the recommendation of its matriculation committee:
> (a) Applicants who do not satisfy any of the requirements listed . . . above, but who submit satisfactory evidence of having passed examinations which are considered by the university to be equivalent to any of those listed; these should normally include the subjects, English language, a foreign language and a mathematical or scientific subject.
> (b) Applicants who have obtained a matriculation certificate awarded by an overseas university approved for this purpose. . . .

And even more elaborate prescriptions may be found—for example in the regulations of the universities of Cambridge and Oxford and of the Scottish Universities Entrance Board.

The precise position in each university requires reference to the individual regulations concerned, but it will be clear from the information contained in the *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook* that the general entrance requirements can be satisfied by means other than the passing of a British examination and that it is the general practice of United Kingdom universities so to frame their regulations as to permit them to consider for this purpose, in appropriate cases, applications from candidates holding suitable foreign qualifications. As mentioned earlier, however, it is normally also necessary for candidates, whether from home or overseas, to satisfy specific requirements for admission to the particular course of study of their choice, and an indication has been given of the form which such requirements take in the case of those with GCE examination qualifications. It is more difficult to separate these two forms of requirement in discussing the position of those applying with foreign qualifications, because in many cases a university will

make a single assessment as to whether the candidate is (a) eligible to matriculate and (b) qualified to enter upon his chosen course of study; indeed, in some cases the decision on (a) may depend upon (b). Such a process of assessment will entail in each university, in respect of each such application, an appraisal, normally by the head of the department concerned, of the content of the course leading to the qualification which the candidate holds, the academic standard of the qualification and the relevance to the course of study on which he desires to enter. Such an appraisal will be based both upon the available factual information, either in published form or ascertainable from the various agencies in the United Kingdom with special knowledge in the relevant field, and upon the accumulated experience within the university about such qualifications.

University of London

It is necessary, however, to make special reference to the position in the University of London, which has a long tradition of admission of students from overseas and which, partly owing to its special structure that permits the registration both of 'internal' and of 'external' students for degrees of the university, is in a unique position. Under the latest regulations of the university, the description in the foregoing paragraph is broadly applicable to candidates for admission to a school of the university as internal students. Thus, if a candidate holds a qualification rendering him eligible for admission to a foreign university and if on the basis of that qualification a school of the university is willing to admit him to a degree course, the university will entertain a request from the school that the candidate be permitted to register as an internal student. In the case of 'external' students of the university, who do not compete for admission or undergo a selection procedure, it is necessary for all candidates, regardless of their foreign qualification, to pass in the GCE examination in such subjects and at such levels as may be necessary to satisfy the general entrance requirements and any further requirement for entry upon the course proposed.

The European convention on equivalences in university entrance qualifications (1953)

Reference should also be made in this general context to the European Convention on the Equivalence of Diplomas Leading to Admission to Universities, which was established in 1953 and subsequently ratified by the United Kingdom Government. The relevant sections of Article 1 of the convention stated:

1. Each Contracting Party shall recognize for the purpose of admission to the universities situated in its territory, admission to which is subject to State control, the equivalence of those diplomas awarded in the territory of each other Contracting Party which constitute a requisite qualification for

admission to similar institutions in the country in which these diplomas are awarded.

2. Admission to any university shall be subject to the availability of places. . . .

4. Where admission to universities situated in the territory of the Contracting Party is outside the control of the State, that Contracting Party shall transmit this text of this convention to the universities concerned and use its best endeavours to obtain acceptance by the latter of the principles stated in the preceding paragraphs.

As section 4 was applicable to the United Kingdom position, the United Kingdom Government, through the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, duly brought the convention to the notice of the universities. The detailed information in Appendix III of the *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook*, referred to above, indicates how widely universities' requirements are consistent with the principles embodied in Article 1 of the convention.

It is perhaps desirable to mention also at this point that while some universities may in some subjects grant exemption from the first year of a three-year degree course to those suitably qualified, particularly if they already hold a degree in the same subject, there is no general provision in United Kingdom universities for the transfer of 'credits' in respect of courses attended at another university (whether in this country or abroad), and it may be taken that all universities will require students to attend at least two of the three years of the course.

University admission requirements for post-graduate study or research

The second aspect of the question of equivalence arises in relation to candidates from abroad seeking to enter a British university for post-graduate study or research. The same basic condition applies: decisions about admission are matters entirely within the discretion of the individual universities concerned. It is not the practice of the United Kingdom universities to recognize the degree of any university as a qualification which automatically entitles its holder to be admitted as a post-graduate student. All applications for admission, whether from graduates of United Kingdom universities or from overseas graduates, are considered on their merits by the individual universities to which they are made. The factors, other than the possession of a first degree, relevant to the consideration of an application for admission include the university's assessment of a candidate's suitability to embark on the course of study or research proposed, as well as the questions whether such a course could be satisfactorily pursued in the university and department concerned, whether the desired line of research could be fitted in with the department's research activities and facilities and whether appropriate and adequate supervision could be provided from the existing staff of the department. Moreover, in view of the limited number of places available for

post-graduate students, it is also necessary to assess the ability of a candidate in relation to other applicants for admission. It is the case that the regulations of a number of universities state that students admitted to post-graduate courses shall be graduates of an 'approved' or 'recognized' university, but in practice universities do not maintain lists of universities 'approved' for the purpose of admission of post-graduate students; acceptance of a person as a post-graduate student constitutes 'approval', for the purposes of his application, of the university from which he comes. Candidates for higher degrees in medicine, dentistry or veterinary science are normally required to possess qualifications registrable with the General Medical Council, the General Dental Council or the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, respectively.

Although no such general practice exists, the regulations of some universities make provision for the use of a qualifying examination in certain cases, though the circumstances in which such examinations are used vary from one university to another. For example, evidence may be required of an adequate standard in written or spoken English, and this may sometimes take the form of an examination conducted overseas. In other cases, candidates who wish to pursue research in a subject which did not form a substantial part of the course for their first degree may have to pass a preliminary examination in that subject before acceptance. It is not unusual for universities, in cases where doubt may exist as to the suitability of a candidate, whether from a home or an overseas university, to require him to register for a probationary period, generally one year. In some cases, a qualifying examination may be imposed at the end of the first year before a candidate is registered for a higher degree. It is often a requirement that a candidate for the degree of doctor of philosophy should register in the first instance as a candidate for the master's degree or a post-graduate diploma.

Equivalences between Commonwealth university degrees and diplomas

In connexion with the third Commonwealth Education Conference, held in Canada in 1964, an inquiry addressed to the United Kingdom universities indicated that whilst there were a number of agencies in the United Kingdom through which information could be obtained about the courses and syllabuses of overseas Commonwealth universities, the principal problem was in evaluating the information thus obtained and in assessing the standards of the degrees which overseas candidates held, particularly in the case of the lesser-known institutions. A committee of the conference considered the problem of equivalences and the relevant paragraphs from its report, which was annexed to the report of the conference, appear below (see Appendix, page 81). The main report of the conference contains the following paragraph:

> In compliance with the recommendations of the Delhi Conference, [1] many governments presented reports on equivalence of qualifications which greatly facilitated discussion of the matter at Ottawo. Unfortunately, the same terms

1. The second Commonwealth Education Conference was held in New Delhi in 1962.

bear different meanings in different parts of the Commonwealth and each country must assess, in relation to the qualifications granted by its own institutions, the degrees and diplomas awarded in other Commonwealth countries. Countries should be helped to obtain the necessary information about the degrees and qualifications of other Commonwealth countries. So far as degrees are concerned, the Conference recommended that the Association of Commonwealth Universities be approached to see whether the section of its annual *Yearbook* giving information about the entrance qualifications, duration and content of degree courses could be expanded.

This recommendation has been implemented by the Association of Commonwealth Universities and the results were to be embodied in the 1966 edition of the *Yearbook*.

The European convention on equivalences in university qualifications (1959)

The European Convention on the Academic Recognition of University Qualifications was agreed in 1959 and subsequently ratified by the United Kingdom Government. The relevant articles are as follows:

Article 2

1. For the purpose of the present convention, Contracting Parties shall be divided into categories according to whether the authority competent in their territory to deal with matters pertaining to the equivalence of university qualifications is: (a) the State; (b) the university; (c) the State or the university, as the case may be.

2. Each Contracting Party shall, within one year of the coming into force of the present convention in respect of itself, inform the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe which is the authority competent in its territory to deal with matters pertaining to the equivalence of university qualification.

Article 3

1. Contracting Parties falling within category (a) in paragraph 1 of Article 2 of the present convention shall grant academic recognition to university qualifications conferred by a university situated in the territory of another Contracting Party.

2. Such academic recognition of a foreign university qualification shall entitle the holder: (a) to pursue further university studies ... and sit for academic examinations on completion of such studies with a view to proceeding to a further degree, including that of a doctorate, on the same conditions as those applicable to nationals of the Contracting Party, where admission to such studies and examinations depends upon the possession of a similar national university qualification, (b) to use an academic title conferred by a foreign university, accompanied by an indication of its origin.

Article 4

In respect of subparagraph 2(a) of Article 3 of the present convention, each Contracting Party may: (a) in cases where the examination requirements for

a foreign university qualification do not include certain subjects prescribed for the similar national qualification, withhold recognition until a supplementary examination has been passed in the subjects in question; (b) require holders of a foreign university qualification to pass a test in its official language, or one of its official languages, in the event of their studies having been pursued in another language.

Article 5

Contracting Parties falling within category (b) in paragraph 1 of Article 2 of the present convention shall transmit the text of the convention to the authorities competent in their territory to deal with matters pertaining to the equivalence of university qualifications and shall encourage the favourable consideration and application by them of the principles set out in Articles 3 and 4 thereof.

In accordance with Article 5 the government, through the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, brought the convention to the notice of United Kingdom universities. Subject to the understanding that the reference in Article 3 to 'the same conditions as those applicable to nationals of the Contracting Party' meant, in the case of Britain, that each case would be considered on its merits and that no qualification would in itself suffice to secure admission, there was a general intimation of willingness on the part of the existing universities to accept the provisions of Article 3,2(a) and Article 4 which, as many pointed out, were consistent with their existing practice.

Finally, it should be emphasized that, while the academic autonomy of the individual universities, which is so fundamental and highly valued a part of the British higher educational scene, necessarily precludes any simple comprehensive statement on the matters which are the subject of the present study, none the less it should be recognized that the sympathetic consideration of applications from overseas students and the admission of substantial numbers of them[1] to courses of study in this country is a practice long established among British universities.

1. At the beginning of the academic year 1964/65 more than 15,000 students from other countries were enrolled for full-time study or research in United Kingdom universities.

Appendix Equivalence of qualifications[1]

34. The question of the equivalence of qualifications arose on several of the committees at Delhi and paragraph 48 of the report of the conference sums up the position very clearly:

'The conference appreciates the complexity and difficulty of the problem. In some cases autonomous bodies are concerned, such as universities, other educational institutions and professional organizations, many of which have specific powers and responsibilities under their charters. In others, governments are involved directly or indirectly in regard to employment in the public services. For the first, it is suggested that governments should invite the autonomous bodies concerned to study the question and see whether any line of advance can be discovered. For the second, where governments are involved, it is suggested that they should themselves initiate appropriate action with reference to employment as well as to status and emoluments. The conference hopes that the authorities concerned will give sympathetic consideration to both problems. The matter should be kept under review by the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee and discussed at a later conference.'

35. The conference papers contain valuable reports on this matter from Britain, Canada, Australia, India, Ceylon, Ghana, Nigeria, Malaysia and the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar which were obtained by the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee in pursuance of this mandate. . . . These reports indicate that there are relatively few difficulties in this respect in the field of higher education since universities are concerned, not to assign persons to grades or categories, but to ascertain whether a particular individual is capable of undertaking a specific type of post-graduate work or research.

36. In this, as in many of the other topics assigned to the committee, the observations of Professor S. Mathai in his address to the conference have been most helpful. He commented on the different meanings attached to the same words in different parts of the Commonwealth and summed the matter up thus:

'Terms like "graduate" and "post-graduate" do not imply the same level of achievement. . . . The age of entry into and the age of leaving the various stages of education differ from country to country.'

This undoubted fact has led at least one country to base its assessment of the equivalence of overseas qualifications on a complicated formula which takes

1. Extract from the report of committee A to the third Commonwealth Education Conference, Ottawa, 1964.

account, *inter alia*, of the period of years normally spent by its own citizens in primary, secondary and tertiary education before a degree of its local university can be achieved, together with a consideration of the language which has been the medium of instruction for the whole or for the major part of the various courses.

37. As the report of the second Commonwealth Education Conference points out, if the machinery for according recognition operates imperfectly, the satisfactory development of Commonwealth co-operation in education is impeded. On the other hand, there is no justification for giving the holders of overseas qualifications the same status and treatment as holders of local qualifications of a higher standard. Since the standard of qualifications varies in different parts of the Commonwealth, the responsibility rests on each country of assessing, in relation to qualifications granted by its own institutions, the degrees and diplomas awarded in other countries of the Commonwealth.

38. In the past, there has been a somewhat restrictive approach to this problem in some countries and it is encouraging to see from the reports submitted to the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee that the comments made at Delhi have not been without their effect. Since the problem is one which all countries have to face, it would be desirable if relevant information about various qualifications in the different countries of the Commonwealth could be made more readily available. . . . So far as university degrees are concerned, the organization in the position to give the greatest assistance is the Association of Commonwealth Universities, and it was suggested that the association should be approached to see if the information contained in its *Yearbook* about entrance qualifications, duration and content of degree courses at the various universities in the Commonwealth could be expanded. Such information in the *Yearbook*, it should be noted, is supplied by each university to the association.

United States of America

by W. H. Strain

Introduction

The methods used in the United States of America to recognize foreign degrees are the same as those used to recognize degrees from American institutions. It is necessary therefore to explain the American way of dealing with academic qualifications in general, and lead from that into a statement about American recognition of foreign degrees.

Universities and other academic bodies in the United States are completely independent and autonomous in the matter of recognition of degrees. They may consult other universities, academic or professional associations, or government agencies, such as the United States Office of Education, but they are not bound to follow the advice given in such consultations. Similarly, although it would be possible for a university to enter into an agreement with another American or with a foreign university regarding reciprocal recognition of degrees, this is not usually done.

There is, of course, within the United States a major system of accrediting associations, which among their other functions do provide a basis for recognition or non-recognition of degrees. Membership of these accrediting associations however has in most cases been limited to institutions in the United States. Yet American recognition of degrees is so bound to accreditation, that the one cannot be explained without explaining the other.

Recognition of foreign degrees and diplomas

How accreditation developed

The first educational institutions in the United States at all levels were voluntary organizations, each meeting the standards it thought necessary. Later, state systems of elementary, secondary and higher education were established parallel to, and in certain areas taking the place of, the voluntary institutions. Eventually the state systems came to be dominant at the elementary and secondary levels. As a result of full public financing of these levels, a considerable degree of central control has been established by the states, or in some cases by their subdivisions, including municipalities and state universities. But in all states there is still, and, if we understand the

American temper, there always will be, room for a great deal of local initiative and diversity in the curriculum and conduct of the schools—even the elementary and secondary schools.

But state control of higher education has seldom been attempted and has never been accomplished. The private higher institutions were well established before public institutions were founded. In some states private institutions are still predominant; in other states the public institutions lead. In the country as a whole there exists a fairly even balance in numbers and in prestige between public and private institutions. Most higher institutions, both public and private, are so securely self-governed and so independent in spirit that it has never been found wise or possible for government agencies (state or national) to try to legislate standards for them. Control of standards has been achieved through open competitions and through voluntary agencies called accrediting associations.

Approximately a century ago, accreditation began to develop at two levels. At the lower level, universities, particularly in the Middle West, began to recognize certain secondary schools as doing a superior job of preparing students for university entrance. The graduates of such schools were given preference for purposes of admission, and were in some cases excused from taking the qualifying tests which at that time were required for admission.

After accreditation of secondary schools by universities had become an accepted pattern, several of the better universities then operating graduate divisions organized the Association of American Universities (AAU), whose principal purpose was to improve standards of preparation for graduate study. Actually they were concerned with two problems:

1. Graduates of their own institutions were not always as well prepared as they should have been to enter graduate study in the United States or in the universities of Europe.
2. Graduates of the multiplicity of other (mostly smaller) colleges and universities were often poorly prepared for graduate study.

The AAU started with a very small membership and even today has less than fifty members. For a time it published a list of colleges and universities which it had approved as institutions preparing students to enter graduate study. Then about the time of the Second World War it ceased its work of accreditation, leaving this activity to six regional associations and various professional associations—which by that time were rapidly taking over the field of accreditation.

The regional associations are voluntary organizations whose members include both higher institutions and secondary schools in a given section of the United States—the six associations together cover all the states. Membership must be earned by meeting rather severe standards and is retained by re-examination at stated intervals. The six regional associations normally judge the entire programme of an institution. Originally some of them considered only institutions that featured an arts and sciences programme, but now many also accept institutions whose programmes have a professional emphasis.

In addition to the regional accrediting bodies, certain professional associations, from time to time, have formed their own accrediting associations. This has sometimes come about because the professional associations wished to stress standards above and beyond those emphasized by the regional associations, and sometimes because the regional associations were not giving attention to areas of especial interest to the profession. Professional schools in the United States are sometimes organized as separate institutions, sometimes as parts of complex universities. In the latter case, a professional accrediting association normally accredits only the school, department or division concerned with the one profession, whereas the regional association examines and accredits the entire institution. Some of the stronger professional associations enforce extremely high standards for accreditation. There is a great diversity of standard among some of the others.

Evaluation of academic credentials

The United States has always placed its emphasis on the ability of an applicant, rather than on the sufficiency of his credentials. These are scanned for what they may tell about his ability, but if a composite view of all available evidence indicates that his ability is greater than his credentials imply, it is quite common for American institutions to accept him at the level where he can perform even if his credentials indicate that placement at a lower level would be correct. Conversely, if all available evidence suggests that a man does not have the desired level of ability, American institutions are inclined not to accept him at any level, no matter what his credentials may be. Sometimes, however, since the American system has always favoured open opportunity, an American admissions officer may permit a person whose qualifications are obscure to enter a programme on trial.

In attempting to determine the ability of the individual applicant, American admissions officers normally require and evaluate the following sorts of information:

1. The accreditation and reputation of the institution in which the applicant was prepared.
2. The type and intensity of the programme he has completed, especially in his major field (or in subjects which are prerequisite for the kind of study he proposes). A specific degree or certificate is usually required as evidence that he has completed the prerequisite level or course of study.
3. His grades and grade average—this may be analysed in various ways, e.g. rank in class or other group, over-all average, average in major field, grades in key subjects, etc.
4. His standing in certain required tests. These may be aptitude tests or subject tests or highly specialized aptitude and personality tests for special purposes.
5. The names and reputations of professors the applicant has studied under and recommendations from such persons.
6. Interviews.

These same types of information in so far as they are available are required whether the applicant is American or foreign. Since foreign and American credentials are handled in the same way, it is necessary to review the use made of the six types of information, with notes as to problems involved in obtaining and assessing this type of information in the cases of foreign applicants.

1. The standing of an institution. The entire American system is competitive—no less in education than in business. The strongest students from the strongest secondary schools are selected to attend the strongest undergraduate colleges, and the strongest graduates from these colleges are selected for admission to the strongest graduate schools. Weaker students or those from weaker high schools and colleges enter colleges and graduate schools that are themselves weaker, and so on. Yet these hierarchies are not fixed or mutually exclusive. All of a student's qualifications have to be considered, and even the college or graduate school with the most prestige will find excellent students now and then coming from institutions of only nominal standing. These are detected through grades, tests, recommendations, etc., but once chosen, they have the same opportunities as if they had come from a stronger institution.

To determine how strong a foreign institution is, the evaluator must fall back on its international reputation plus whatever he knows personally and what he can gain from his reference books, from casual contacts (perhaps with faculty members who have been there), from the application before him and from his correspondence. In most cases there is really a great deal of evidence to be found and used. The student from the stronger institution is the one, other things being equal, who will be preferred.

The graduate of an American institution that is not accredited is usually given no consideration at all or is required to take examinations to establish the equivalence of his previous education. Since accreditation does not exist in most foreign countries, the admissions officer must improvise some substitute for it. He usually treats the government-supported universities and the better-known private universities in the same way as United States accredited institutions of higher education. Most countries have, in addition to actual universities, a variety of other higher-education institutions. It is very difficult for American educators to decide whether to accept some of these institutions as accredited. Many educators take an easy, but not necessarily reliable, way out of the difficulty by accepting as accredited the institutions that are listed in such directories as the *International Handbook of Universities and Other Institutions of Higher Learning*, the *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook*, and Unesco's *World Survey of Education* (Volume IV, *Higher Education*). Other institutions are likely to be treated as non-accredited unless specific favourable information is available from such sources as: (a) the United States Office of Education, which publishes monographs on foreign education and answers inquiries from institutions; (b) the Council on Evaluation of Foreign Student Credentials, which authorizes 'placement recommendations' that are included in publications of the *World*

Education series (see 'Bibliographical Note', page 99); (c) publications of the government of the country concerned; and (d) other professional sources or agencies. Many American institutions follow a practice of asking the United States Office of Education for information when they receive a student's educational record from a foreign institution they do not find listed.

The thing American educators are really interested in is the identification of the top-quality institutions in each country and the encouragement of students from these top institutions to study in the United States.

2. *The programme completed.* At the undergraduate level, American colleges and universities strongly prefer students who have emphasized language, mathematics and science in secondary school. Our experience generally has taught us to believe that specialization in applied subjects (e.g. commerce, agriculture, shopwork, etc.) at high-school level does not give a good preparation for higher education. Most American colleges and universities, therefore, limit their selection of foreign undergraduates to those applicants who have completed the academic secondary programme required for entrance to arts or science faculties in the home country.

Admission to graduate study in the United States will generally be granted to an applicant only in a field in which he has completed a full undergraduate 'major' (specialization) at an institution that is not only accredited but known to be well staffed and qualified to present work in the subject field. Even accredited colleges are not equally qualified in all areas, and graduate professors in a speciality will know a good bit about departments in neighbouring colleges. The range of undergraduate subjects available varies widely from college to college. Even where courses are available, the candidate may not have taken a full major or a well-distributed selection of courses, and so may not be considered well grounded. There is also the student who wants to do graduate work in a field in which he did not major, and the student who did not really complete a well-organized major in anything. An applicant will be judged by the sufficiency of his undergraduate preparation for the field he proposes to enter. Such professional schools as medicine, dentistry and optometry require a quite specific series of pre-professional courses in an accredited institution and no substitutes are permitted.

In foreign universities, students generally follow programmes that are much more specialized than is typical of undergraduate programmes in American universities, but that does not mean that all foreign applicants have completed undergraduate majors as understood in the United States. Sometimes the programme completed abroad is too restricted to support American graduate study. For example, a graduate in home economics who has never studied chemistry is not ready for graduate work in an American university, and the graduate who has taken all his work in the theoretical phases of a subject may not be able to go ahead where laboratory work is expected. There are many such problems. Often the thing most lacking is a prerequisite subject or a supporting 'minor' (secondary specialization). Sometimes the institution

attended may have lacked staff, experience and equipment to complete advanced phases of a programme. Evaluators find it very difficult to determine whether a foreign applicant has had a satisfactory undergraduate major even if he wants to go on in the same speciality, but, in fact, it often happens that the student wishes to change his speciality and sometimes even his general field. This may make him virtually ineligible for admission to the field he has indicated.

If a student applies to attend a professional programme in the United States, the institutions and programmes he has attended abroad are looked at to see how they compare with American ones. If the programme abroad was carried out at a lower level of the educational system, or seriously lacked scientific content, or was taught by faculty members of inadequate educational background or with a serious shortage of time and equipment, the applicant will be evaluated as having come from a non-accredited institution or programme. A student coming from such a background will not usually be found eligible to enter degree or research programmes. He will probably be either rejected or classified at a lower level or as a non-degree student.

3. Grades and their interpretation. The fact that several systems of grading are used in the United States should not obscure the fact that grades are among the most significant of the criteria used in student selection. Grades are the devices by which professors attempt to communicate their judgement of the level of excellence reached by the student in a particular course, examination or thesis. While it is realized that no one can be thoroughly objective in grading (indeed, the several systems of grading represent attempts to remedy dissatisfaction with grading), yet grades are generally believed to be the most available measure of how a student performs in competition with his peers. Virtually every course in an American university is graded, usually after an examination. Sometimes faculties will become concerned about the pressures put on students to earn high grades and will set up reporting systems that tend to conceal exact grades, but most of these experiments are short-lived. The American system has thrived on competitive grading and will continue to stress this feature.

High-school grades (often rank in class is used as a convenient substitute) are shown by research to be the best single prediction of undergraduate grades. After a student enters college or university, his grades from year to year are the best prediction of his ability to continue and to progress from level to level in American higher education.

Graduate admissions officers use undergraduate grades in several ways. The commonest is to average all grades, or all academic grades. Another is to make a separate average of the grades in the major or other fields of special interest. Some schools insist upon being told how a student ranked in comparison with other students in his class or his major group. Allied to this is a consideration of honours at graduation, scholarships held, prizes, citations, etc. Some persons attempt to weight the averages according to some

preconceived notion of the way the applicant's school should be rated in comparison to other schools. Some give attention to whether the grades have improved or regressed, perhaps putting special attention on the last year or two in the major subject.

In the light of this American concern with grades, it is not surprising that Americans insist that foreign credentials show grades. And although availability of grades in various foreign systems differs widely, and the meaning and distribution of foreign grades may differ greatly from American patterns, evaluators nevertheless depend heavily upon whatever grades they can get in determining the admissibility of foreign students.

Prospective students and research personnel coming from approved institutions and programmes abroad are selected competitively with students from accredited United States institutions, the applicant's standing in his own system having been estimated by the selective devices and grading systems of the country and institution of origin. The evaluator in the United States tends to think of the grades reported from abroad in the same way as he does of the grades which he receives from American institutions. Where specific information about grading practices in the foreign system is lacking, he is likely to assume that grade distribution in the applicant's institution follows a pattern similar to that experienced in United States institutions. This is often not the case.

Perhaps the most controversial problem in interpreting grades concerns the evaluation of quality in the case of degrees obtained with grades that have barely reached the pass level. Some people argue that such grades should be compared to the American C (usually the lowest average accepted for graduation) whereas other people argue that a foreign grade that not reaches the pass level should be considered a D (usually the lowest passing grade for a course, but too low to be used as an average for graduation).

Another controversial area involves decisions as to what foreign grades should be interpreted as the American A, B and C, respectively, for purposes of admission to schools which require American applicants to present a certain average in order to qualify for admission. When only three grades or levels (such as first, second and third class) are given, there is a question whether these three should equal A, B and C, or whether some device should be used to distribute the three grades into a pattern of A, B, C and D. In general each university makes its own decisions on such points as these, but there is, of course, frequent consultation; and since in any case the number of possible answers is limited, there is only a small number of patterns followed. Usually each is partly valid; seldom is any perfect. The important thing to stress here is that American evaluators attempt to find in foreign grading systems something similar in nature and purpose to the grading patterns they receive from American institutions.

4. The role of tests. Examinations and tests of various types have always been used by American universities to help determine entrance qualifications for the undergraduate programme. The extent of the emphasis on tests has

varied from institution to institution and has changed with time. At present, virtually all colleges and universities require an aptitude test, usually the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) Scholastic Aptitude Test (called SAT), and give results of this test a weight almost as great as that given to the secondary-school record. A large portion of colleges and universities also require achievement tests in certain subjects, many specifying that three of the CEEB achievement tests must be taken. The weight given to the achievement tests in determining admission varies widely.

In the light of this experience and confidence in the use of tests, it is easy to see why American admissions officers accept readily the results of national 'maturity' examinations, and of the British and African School Certificate and General Certificate of Education examinations, as important parts of admission qualifications. In fact, since these national examinations are reported with a greater degree of uniformity than is true of school records from the same countries, and since, in any case, the national examination is considered necessary to validate the secondary-school record, American admissions officers tend to place first emphasis on the examination certificate and a lesser emphasis on school reports. Few colleges and universities in the United States will accept a foreign applicant for undergraduate admission unless he can present the 'maturity', GCE or other certificate which is required for admission to the principal, usually public, university in his own country. In cases such as the *Abitur* of the Federal Republic of Germany, where a thirteenth year of school must be taken to qualify for the examination, American universities are friendly to the idea of allowing the student advanced standing (that is, credit at the time of entrance) in some of the subjects he has studied in the secondary school. But admission after the twelfth year of school without the examination—even if the examination would not come until the thirteenth year—is not usually considered.

Until the last two decades, many graduate schools were only mildly interested in tests as criteria for graduate admission, but the use of tests has increased rapidly in recent years. The aptitude test of the Graduate Record Examination is widely required. Many professions and academic disciplines have developed or found tests to help in the selection of students for certain fields of interest. Quite a variety of these are required now in many areas. As the techniques of testing improve and as the numbers of would-be students increase, the use of tests will also increase, and the refinements of test interpretation will develop accordingly.

Language and culture and, to some extent, textbook differences make it difficult to use American tests with foreign applicants. Virtually all American-designed tests use the English language as the medium of communication, and this imposes a language problem on applicants for whom English is not the native language. Even native English speakers reared in a non-American environment find an American culture bias in such tests which causes them occasionally to be slowed down or to misinterpret a question. So the results obtained when American tests are used abroad are not as reliable as the results obtained when the same tests are used with native-born United States

applicants—although foreign students who pass such tests have demonstrated not only a mastery of the subject or aptitude tested, but also a proficiency in English that is a great asset to one who will study in the United States. Another difficulty is the fact that most students educated abroad lack acquaintance with the American 'objective' or short-answer type of testing. For these reasons and because of the heavy cost of organizing such tests outside the United States, American tests have not been much used until recently in the selection of foreign students. Institutions in general preferred to rely on the testing indigenous to the foreign system, and to make their own deductions as to interpretation.

National systems of testing at the secondary level in many countries have reached a high standard of development, even though they are often limited to essay-type, teacher-graded tests. But at the degree level there seems to be less uniformity. American educators have been disappointed many times in trying to guess the level of achievement represented by foreign degrees and are coming more and more to experiment with the use of American tests and to require them to be taken by foreign applicants. In a few instances these tests may be developed (at least experimentally) in the language of the applicant (an example is the Spanish version of the CEEB SAT), but in most cases they are set in English. Currently, Educational Testing Service and other agencies are working with forms of tests which have been specially edited to eliminate culture bias and language problems as much as possible. An early example was the special version of the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test prepared for the use of the African Scholarship Program of American Universities. Results of such experiments are encouraging. Both general aptitude tests and achievement tests of this sort are being developed.

Unlike some systems abroad, examinations are seldom used in the United States as the sole or principal factor determining admission. Also, examinations used by United States institutions are more likely to be susceptible of uniform scoring, making the results more amenable to comparisons on a mass basis. The weight given to examination results tends to be inversely related to the accreditation and quality of the institution in which the applicant was educated. An applicant from an unknown or little-known institution may be accepted mainly on the basis of his examination, whereas in the case of a candidate who comes from a highly rated institution, the examination may be given a subordinate position in the decision. To the extent that an admissions officer is uncertain or poorly informed about an institution, there is a tendency to put greater dependence on examinations. An example of this is the development of a special examination in the United States which in recent years has been required of foreign-educated doctors who wish to study further in the United States. Such as system would probably never have developed, had not American medical schools found it difficult to ascertain the standards and facilities in the medical schools from which foreign-educated doctors were coming. In fact, the American Medical Association about fifteen years ago was issuing a partial list of foreign medical schools whose graduates it would accept on the same basis as those from

accredited medical schools in the United States. The list was given up at about the time that the examination was established. One may surmise that the difficulty of getting information about medical schools in many diverse countries was a factor in this decision.

5. Recommendations. Recommendations vary widely as to their quality and usefulness. Some systems outside the United States depend largely on them, some hardly use them at all; inside the United States dependence on them varies. To the extent that other information is less than complete, the weight given to recommendations increases. Professional contacts among leading men in any discipline tend to be well established in the United States. Every speciality has its annual meeting, professional writing is considered a necessity and many other contacts through committees, regional associations, professional journals, etc., are maintained. Many of the best students are recommended by one leading professor to another, and such recommendations carry a great deal of weight. On the other hand, the recommendation by a professor who is unknown because he has not himself contributed significantly to his profession will carry little weight. Recommendations are widely required, but what they say, and, above all, who writes them, make all the difference between whether they are treated as waste paper or given top consideration.

A large part of the value of recommendations is lost when the reader does not know the writer, and it goes without saying that the probability that reader and writer will know each other decreases as the distance increases and as language and culture differences are multiplied. The United States system has never depended as much on recommendations as, for instance, the British system has done, and American educators are not as astute as they should be in reading between the lines of recommendations where unfavourable things are implied rather than stated openly. Consequently, by and large, educators in the United States do not put much reliance on the typical, formally worded and polite type of recommendation that so often accompanies credentials from abroad. Yet sometimes a more direct statement, especially by someone whose reputation is known, may be the most valued part of a dossier.

At the undergraduate level, it should be pointed out that most American institutions will not admit a freshman student who is not favourably recommended by his secondary school. Such a recommendation correlates well with success in higher study. American educators wish they could get recommendations of the same sort, and as reliable, from foreign secondary-school officials.

6. Interviews. There has been a good bit of research on the question of how reliable interviews are in the selection of students for American educational institutions. Most such studies indicate that there is little correlation between the interview report and subsequent student success, but many institutions still require interviews. Some do it partly to eliminate people who may seem

to have undesirable personalities, but many have confidence that an experienced and competent interviewer can make a significant contribution to the assessment of an applicant's ability.

Foreign applicants are usually in their homelands when they apply to American universities. Consequently, unless the American university has faculty or other personnel in the same area, it is likely to be impossible to arrange an interview, except through a third party. Some institutions use their alumni, but this has not seemed practical to most. A few institutions have experimented with co-operative representation abroad through professional associations. An outstanding example of co-operative interviewing abroad is the experiment now being carried out by the American Economic Association.

The largest project for interviewing non-sponsored applicants in their home countries has been set up by the Institute of International Education, which currently arranges interviews in at least twenty-six countries on four continents. Others carrying out interview services for private students include American Friends of the Middle East and the American-Korean Foundation. Education and World Affairs and some other associations and agencies have recommended in recent months that facilities for interviewing non-sponsored students outside the United States should be improved and made available in all countries.

More widespread arrangements for interviews outside the United States are available for students who are sponsored by government and philanthropic agencies. The programmes set up for these students usually include interviews and other types of screening in the home country by bi-national committees, Fulbright commissions, the African-American Institute, the African Scholarship Program of American Universities, Instituto Colombiano de Especialización Técnica en el Exterior (ICETEX), international corporations having branches in several countries, etc.

Various professional certifications

Many professions in the United States have set up specific standards as to the type and amount of education that are a prerequisite for licensure. Regulations often detail the amount, not only of professional studies, but also of general and pre-professional study in specified areas; they may also specify the accreditation of the pre-professional and professional institutions attended. Naturally, all accredited educational institutions in the United States conform to these standards. Some countries outside the United States require similar levels and kinds of study, but others provide training of vastly different level, extent and content for some of the same professions.

As an example, it is common for states in the United States to require elementary-school teachers to hold a master's degree from a university, whereas in many countries elementary-school teachers are trained outside the universities in schools that parallel secondary or junior-college levels of education. American universities do not accept that teacher training in such

programmes is of the same level as that required in the United States. The same sort of discrepancy in levels of education exists in preparation for various health, engineering, agricultural and other specialities. If a person who holds a professional title earned elsewhere comes to the United States as a visitor or as a participant in some sort of brief training programme, he is likely to be accepted into non-degree programmes and shown the courtesies due to his professional rating in his home country; but if he offers himself as a candidate for a degree, his professional and even pre-professional education will be examined to see how it compares in quantity, intensity, laboratory experience, faculty qualifications, etc., with the education required for a similar profession in the United States. If his education is believed to have serious shortcomings, the applicant is likely to be denied admission to the programme he has requested, or asked to make up deficiencies before attempting his degree programme, or asked to submit to qualifying examinations.

Foreign secondary certificates

Holders of 'maturity' or similar certificates from countries that have well-established systems of university-preparatory schools leading to a rigorously graded State (or public external) examination that is a prerequisite for admission to universities of the country concerned, usually fare pretty well when they apply for admission to an American university. Americans tend to be impressed (perhaps too much so) by the selectivity involved and the academic emphasis in such programmes. But few Americans today accept, what was once commonly believed, that university-preparatory schools in Europe include the content of two years of college or university study in the United States. The more common evaluation of such programmes today is to accept them as the basis for university admission, which is the way they are accepted in Europe.

Americans find that the better students in the better preparatory schools in the United States can be taught the content of some of the first-year university courses while still in secondary school. Those who successfully complete these courses in secondary school and who achieve suitable placement by examination or by further study in the same subject taught at the university, are allowed university credit for the courses. Similarly, the better students from the better preparatory schools in Europe are expected to be able to pass over certain freshman courses with credit, and it is arranged for them to do so.

The bachelor's degree or its equivalent

Admission to graduate study in the United States is given only to holders of the bachelor's degree or its equivalent from an accredited institution. This poses a major problem in evaluation of foreign credentials because foreign universities in most cases do not give the bachelor's degree—and sometimes

not any degree that is closely analogous to it. It is difficult in such cases to determine what foreign degree or other credential should be accepted for entrance to graduate study in the United States. It is, however, the common practice of American institutions to insist that the candidate must have completed some degree (or at least some comprehensive examination) that requires approximately as many years of university study as the American bachelor's degree. A common subject of discussion when American educators meet is the question of what specific foreign degrees should or should not be accepted as a basis for graduate admission. Once the acceptability of the degree has been established, the other criteria for determining the qualifications of the applicant (discussed at length in earlier sections of this paper) are applied.

Post-doctoral status

The doctoral degrees awarded by institutions in the United States are valued chiefly because they qualify the holder for professional employment. The subject of the equivalence of degrees for purposes of professional qualification and employment is specifically excluded from this paper. But the holder of a foreign doctorate is assumed in the United States to have proved his talents and abilities in some area of research, and consequently he is usually offered professional courtesies and privileges such as the use of libraries and research apparatus, and is welcomed as a colleague at institutions of learning and research wherever he may choose to go. Some universities and laboratories with special facilities offer courses for post-doctoral students and award certificates or diplomas in certain specialities at post-doctoral level.

In those cases where the post-doctoral scholar is supported by a fellowship or study grant, or where he is on sabbatical leave supported by funds from his regular employer or some other agency, it might be questioned whether he should be classified as a student or an employee. But, waiving that question, it may be said here that United States institutions ordinarily recognize as a post-doctoral scholar only that person who holds an earned terminal degree from a recognized major university, and such a degree as requires a length of study, independent research, dissertation and comprehensive examinations similar to those required for the doctorate in philosophy of major universities of the United States.

The role of government agencies

The United States Government does not operate universities or research institutions (except the service academies and a few very specialized facilities) and so has little or no occasion to assess qualifications of persons wishing to enter study or research under government auspices.

Similarly, the United States Government does not control or direct either public or private schools or universities at any level. Consequently it has no occasion to prescribe what recognition American schools and universities

should give to foreign degrees. American schools and universities do frequently ask the United States Office of Education (USOE) in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to help them interpret foreign educational documents, but the responses of USOE are entirely advisory in nature and do not in any way control the decisions made by the individual institutions.

USOE is noted for its production of research studies in comparative education. These are widely circulated and used by educators in the United States as resource documents in determining the level and type of education represented by foreign education certificates.

Bilateral and multilateral conventions and agreements

As mentioned earlier, it is not the usual practice of United States universities and academic bodies to enter into bilateral or multilateral agreements regarding reciprocal recognition of credits and degrees. Since this is not usually done with institutions within the United States, it is, of course, not usually done with institutions outside the United States.

Likewise, the United States Government does not enter into bilateral or multilateral agreements with other governments in regard to reciprocal recognition of academic qualifications.

Co-operative work on problems of evaluation and placement

The United States Office of Education advisory service

For several decades USOE has maintained a staff of comparative-education specialists among whose duties are: (a) research and publication of monographs on comparative education; and (b) response to questions raised by educational institutions in this country about the interpretation of foreign educational documents submitted by applicants. USOE has never given institutions directions in regard to the recognition of degrees, institutions, credits and examinations, but has limited its assistance to giving the questioner basic information on which to reach his own decision about recognition and placement. This is in strict accord with the American system of separate and autonomous institutions. In the 1940s and 1950s USOE on several occasions arranged for an admissions officer from one of the universities to be employed for a few weeks or months at USOE as what amounted to an intern. Three of the admissions officers so employed later represented their professional associations on the Council on Evaluation of Foreign Student Credentials (CEFSC) and became authors of pamphlets in the *World Education* series (see 'Bibliographical Note', page 99). Two of them were editors of the *World Education* series. One became secretary and later chairman of CEFSC.

The Council on Evaluation of Foreign Student Credentials (CEFSC)

Most of the people who deal with foreign students realize that such students have many problems that are different from, or more acute than, the problems of native students. Professional associations were somewhat hindered in delving into these problems because such associations in the United States are organized along the lines of the various specialities.

Since it was obvious that many of the foreign students' problems arose from faulty evaluation of previous education and faulty placement in educational institutions in the United States (for example, unwise admission, or admission at the wrong level, or in the wrong speciality), the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) in 1955 called together representatives of a number of other professional groups and of two government agencies, and the meeting resulted in the founding of CEFSC. At the present time, seven professional associations hold membership in the council and six agencies and organizations are observers. Both members and observers send representatives with voting rights to council meetings (in the list below the number of voting representatives of each is shown in parentheses). The members are: AACRAO (3); the American Association of Junior Colleges (1); the Association of American Colleges (1); the Association of Graduate Schools of the Association of American Universities (2); the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States (1); the Institute of International Education (1); and the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (2). Observer agencies and organizations are: the American Council on Education (1); the College Entrance Examination Board (1); the United States Department of State, Agency for International Development (1); the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (1); the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education (1); and the University of the State of New York, State Education Department (1).

The council's chief function to date has been to draw up and approve sections called 'placement recommendations', that are included in pamphlets on foreign education published by AACRAO as the *World Education* series (see 'Bibliographical Note', page 99).

In 1965 CEFSC approved placement recommendations for more than forty countries and areas in Africa. These were to be published in a book entitled *Education in Africa* (see 'Bibliographical Note', page 99).

The CEFSC recommendations regarding placement of students and recognition of degrees are not binding on the member organizations or on their member institutions, but they do establish helpful patterns.

Workshops on foreign credential evaluation

AACRAO as an organization has been meeting for more than fifty years, some of the other professional organizations are as old, and the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) is almost twenty years

old. Such organizations frequently hold workshops in their annual national and regional meetings to discuss the evaluation of foreign credentials. Some of these workshops held at the meetings of AACRAO and NAFSA have dealt with quite complicated problems. NAFSA has teamed with the Asia Foundation, and more recently with the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii, and with other agencies and foundations, to put on two-week seminars. One held at the East-West Center resulted in a publication covering education in Hong Kong, India, Japan, and the Republic of China, with recommendations developed at the workshop.

Several universities have held short courses or summer courses on the subject of foreign credential evaluation.

About four years ago AACRAO and NAFSA joined with the College Entrance Examination Board and the Institute of International Education to form a liaison committee which has among other things promoted regional workshops on foreign credential evaluation. These have been held at a number of locations with collaboration from such organizations as the Council of Graduate Schools and the American Association of Junior Colleges.

Conclusion

The method used in the United States of assessing foreign educational qualifications may seem to the casual inquirer to be disorderly and inefficient, but in reality it is the reverse. It requires each institution to consider the merits of each applicant separately. Undoubtedly a great many errors of judgement are made, but, on the whole, more attention is given to the abilities of the individual and less to his place in a system—especially as the system might be misunderstood or misjudged on the basis of faulty information.

American universities refuse admission to many foreign applicants who meet all requirements for university study in their own countries, and they occasionally grant admission to some who do not meet admission requirements in their home countries. But it seems likely that institutions in the United States are selecting a more successful group of foreign students than they might do if they followed only the rules that are followed by universities in the students' home countries. For after all, the universities of the several countries are not identical and do not require identical types of students for successful performance.

In his approach to the assessment of foreign education, the American tends to believe that the foreign school system is trying to do the same things as an American school with students of similar age and academic objective. The American therefore assumes that he will find in the foreign school record some confirmation that the same basic objectives were accomplished as would have been attempted in the United States. This makes the task enormously easier, for it is a positive rather than a negative approach. But the

assumption builds in a factor of error in favour of the applicant. It begins by giving the foreign applicant the benefit of any doubt.

This tendency to resolve uncertainties about the meaning of credentials in favour of the applicant is a basic factor that explains many of the apparently illogical decisions made by Americans to the confusion of foreign observers. But it is a tendency as deeply embedded in American life and business as in education. It is a part of what has caused the United States to be referred to as 'the land of opportunity'.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The major national and international directories are so well known they scarcely require to be listed, but some of the materials produced in the United States and circulating chiefly there may need identification. The following list includes only those materials that have been found most useful by American educators who deal with placement of foreign students:

Unesco publications are extremely useful, especially *World Survey of Education,* Volume III: *Secondary Education,* and Volume IV: *Higher Education.*

The International Association of Universities' *International Handbook of Universities and Other Institutions of Higher Learning* is a necessity.

The Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth's *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook* also is an international directory of great importance.

Education in Africa by Inez H. Sepmeyer and Martena T. Sasnett describes education in all countries of Africa except the United Arab Republic. (To be published by the University of California Press.)

The American Council on Education issues publications on comparative education. One of its very important services at the present time is that it distributes the publications of the International Association of Universities and the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth (see above) and the publications of AACRAO (see below) and of other professional groups.

The Office of Education (USOE) in the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare has for many years published a stream of monographs, many of them describing education in specific foreign countries. These may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, United States Government Printing Office.

AACRAO (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers) has over the last ten years published the *World Education* series, which now includes some thirty-two pamphlets. The series consists of: a manual entitled *Do-it-yourself Evaluation of Foreign Student Credentials* (revised edition—the whole booklet approved by the Council on Evaluation of Foreign Student Credentials); a descriptive report without recommendations entitled *Scandinavian Study Tour;* studies of seventeen different countries, each including recommendations, covering Argentina, Austria, Canada (out of print), France, Federal Republic of Germany (revised edition), India, Iraq (in press), Italy, Japan (in press), Korea, Lebanon, Mexico, Netherlands, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom and Venezuela; and thirteen supplements (consisting of placement recommendations) to be used with USOE

bulletins on education in Afghanistan, the Caribbean region, Chili, Czechoslovakia, Eastern Germany (in press), Hong Kong, Iran, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Tanganyika and U.S.S.R. (in press). AACRAO publications are distributed by the American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.

The Institute of International Education, New York, has published a number of helpful pamphlets and periodicals. Among its publications are reports of some of the co-operative workshops alluded to earlier.

The National Association for Foreign Student Affairs, Washington, D.C., publishes materials in the field of evaluation. The most recent of these is entitled *The Evaluation of Asian Educational Credentials: A Workshop Report.*

Part II

An appraisal of the methods of establishing equivalences between degrees and diplomas for academic purposes

by C. A. Bodelsen

Introduction

In all countries the problem of equivalence is closely bound up with the national systems of courses of study, examinations and degrees. As the basic principle underlying the granting of equivalences is usually that the qualifications held by the applicant must be roughly the same in content as the qualifications for which he seeks equivalence in a foreign university, it is impossible to give anything like an exact picture of the actual state of affairs in these matters in any country without also describing the examinations, diplomas, etc., required of nationals. The following sections, therefore, give an outline of the examinations and degrees in the six countries under review, in so far as information on them is available in the national replies, and of the methods employed by them in according equivalences; they are based on the very full accounts received from each of them.

A final section sums up the methods employed in establishing equivalences, and discusses the pros and cons of these methods.

Czechoslovakia

A basic feature of higher education in Czechoslovakia is the role played by the State. All the universities and other institutions of higher education are State establishments, and their examination rules are embodied in laws and governmental decrees. The State also comes into the picture at various points in connexion with the granting of equivalences.

The present rules governing examinations and degrees are contained in a law which came into effect in May 1966; they apply to all institutions of higher education. Under this new legislation study at universities and other institutions of higher education can lead either to basic terminal qualifications or to higher research degrees. The pattern of the basic terminal qualifications is as follows: graduation is marked by the award of a diploma with mention of the particular field of study or major subject; this may be followed by the award of the title of doctor—in law, natural science or philosophy. Correspondingly, graduation at schools of technology, economics and agriculture leads to the appropriate professional title, which may be followed by the title of doctor. In medicine and veterinary medicine, however, there is no diploma and the first award is that of the title of doctor. Schools of fine arts award diplomas but no doctorates.

These degrees, including the doctorates, are titles indicating ordinary graduation, and quite distinct from the higher research degrees.

There are two such research degrees, that of candidate of science (*kandidát věd*) and the still higher degree of doctor of science (*doktor věd*). In both cases the title is followed by an indication of the subject in which the degree was taken.

The degree of *kandidát* of science is a prerequisite for an academic or research appointment. Candidates for it, 'aspirants', must show ability to do scientific work, confirmed by the solution of a scientific problem or by research work, in which they must demonstrate their grasp of scientific methods, as well as the possession of thorough theoretical knowledge, and they must discover new facts about, or throw new light on, the subject in question. They must pass an examination and present a thesis and defend it publicly.

The degree of doctor of science is a higher doctorate normally awarded only to persons of considerable academic seniority. It corresponds to the degree of doctor of science in the U.S.S.R. and is perhaps also comparable in standing to the doctorates awarded by the Scandinavian universities, but it

has no counterpart in most other countries. Candidates for its award must show scientific ability of a very high order, by original work of importance for the branch of knowledge in question or for its application to practical problems. Candidates for the degree must write and defend a major thesis.

Candidates for both these advanced degrees must first have acquired a basic degree. In order to present a thesis for the degree of doctor of science, a candidate must already have obtained that of *kandidát* of science, unless he is a member of one of the academies of sciences, a university professor or a research worker holding a senior post. The degrees are conferred by institutions of higher education, by the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, and by the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

Such questions as may arise in connexion with the award of the two advanced degrees are decided by the State Commission for Higher Degrees, whose decisions are final, and whose members and president are appointed by the government. The subjects in which these degrees may be obtained are defined by a law of 1964, the provisions of which may, however, be adapted to changing conditions by the state commission.

Methods of establishing equivalences

The principles governing equivalences are laid down in the law dealing with institutions of higher education, and the details of their application are specified in a decree of the Ministry of Education.

The general principle is that foreign qualifications may be recognized if their content is deemed to be equivalent to that of those awarded by Czechoslovak institutions of higher education. Recognition may apply either to the whole of the applicant's previous studies and his final examination or examinations, or to certain of the examinations he has passed. In principle, recognition can only be granted if the applicant's studies correspond, in duration and scope, to studies that can be undertaken in Czechoslovak institutions of higher education. Candidates who have been sent abroad to study by the Czechoslovak Government may be exempted from these conditions.

If the candidate's previous training corresponds only partly to that which can be undertaken in Czechoslovak institutions of higher education, he may obtain equivalence by passing a supplementary examination. This examination is not required of Czechoslovak nationals who have been sent on bursaries by their government to study in the other Socialist countries. Nor is it required of nationals of the Socialist countries who have received their previous training at home, and who obtain a permit to live permanently in Czechoslovakia.

Decisions on applications are taken by the dean of the relevant faculty, or, if the school in question is not divided into faculties, by its rector. Recognition must be sanctioned by the Ministry of Education.

The certificates and other documents on which the candidate bases his application must, if international agreements do not provide otherwise, be

authenticated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of his country and the Czechoslovak embassy there. If equivalence is sought for a completed course in medicine or pharmacy, the Czechoslovak Ministry of Health must approve it. If the applicant is a Czechoslovak national, he must also produce an extract from his court record and a *curriculum vitae*, in which he must state the reasons for which he undertook studies abroad. Those sent abroad by the Czechoslovak Government must also present a certificate to this effect from the Ministry of Education.

The procedure described above is most used in connexion with applications by Czechoslovak nationals for the recognition of qualifications acquired abroad.

For foreign students proposing to undertake post-graduate studies, or studies leading to the two above-mentioned advanced degrees, the procedure is generally simpler. Their applications are dealt with by the University of 17 November in Prague, which, in addition to its ordinary teaching duties, is the central organ for the reception of foreign students. This university keeps a register of all foreign students and looks after their welfare. Decisions on applications for equivalence are taken by its Admissions Committee after scrutiny of the qualifications of the applicant, the basic principle being that their content must correspond to what is required of Czechoslovak nationals proposing to study for the same degree. The committee is composed of representatives of the Ministry of Education and professors of the institutions of higher education, and is presided over by the rector of the University of 17 November.

In deciding upon questions of equivalence the Admissions Committee is guided by directives issued in 1966 by the Ministry of Education, and these list a number of foreign qualifications which are accepted as entitling the holder to undertake post-graduate studies or enter upon the *aspirantura* (a form of organized post-graduate study including some prescribed courses and some research).

Applications for the equivalence of foreign qualifications with the Czechoslovak advanced research degrees are dealt with by the institutions of university rank and the research councils of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and the Slovak Academy of Sciences (CAS and SAS). These are empowered to nominate committees to evaluate the applicant's doctoral thesis or the examinations for which he seeks equivalence. Here again the principle is that the level of the foreign qualification must correspond to that of the Czechoslovak qualification for which equivalence is sought, though partial examinations taken abroad may be recognized separately.

The application must be accompanied by a certificate of nationality, examination certificates, etc., and a copy of the thesis presented by the applicant for his degree, all duly authenticated in the way mentioned above. If the applicant is a foreigner, he must previously have obtained the permission of the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior.

Applications are refused if the applicant does not submit all the relevant documents, or if his application is not sanctioned by the Ministry of the

Interior. If the applicant is not refused on these grounds, examiners are appointed by the rector of the university concerned or by the research councils of CAS and SAS. The task of the examiners is to pronounce on his qualifications for obtaining the desired recognition, by written report.

This report is then submitted to the institution competent to award the qualification with which he desires to obtain equivalence, and the latter decides whether his application is to be accepted. For the degree of *kandidát* of science, it is either the research council of the university concerned or one of the research colleges or presidia of CAS or SAS; for the degree of doctor of science it is either the research council of a university or one of the presidia of CAS or SAS which is the deciding body.

Only in rare cases does the government, through the Ministry of Education or other ministries, take decisions in matters of equivalence. The Ministry of Education only intervenes when the studies undertaken abroad are of a kind that cannot be undertaken in Czechoslovakia. When this is the case, the ministry may refer the question to one of the national institutions of higher education whose courses correspond most closely to those taken by the applicant. Furthermore the ministry can, in appropriate cases, grant exemptions from the regulations relating to the granting of equivalences. Thus, where the qualifications of the applicant do not fulfil the over-all requirements of Czechoslovak universities, it can recognize qualifications that only partly correspond to the latter, and exempt the applicant from the supplementary examination otherwise required in such cases. It can also recognize the equivalence of courses of study that cannot be pursued in Czechoslovak institutions of higher education, and recognize foreign degrees that cannot be obtained there.

For the recognition of advanced degrees, the central organ is the State Commission for Higher Degrees. Applications for the recognition of such degrees are submitted to the State commission if there is no faculty council and no research council of the CAS or SAS comptetent to nominate examining commissions in the field in question.

In such cases the State commission empowers the faculty council of the institution of higher education or the research council of one of the abovementioned academies, which may appoint examination commissions in the relevant subject, to deal with the application for equivalence. The State commission also functions as an instance of appeal against the refusal of applications, where such appeal is permitted. It keeps a record of all equivalences granted and causes them to be published in the journal of the Ministry of Education. In exceptional cases, the State commission may grant exemption from the regulations governing the granting of equivalence for advanced degrees.

Bilateral and multilateral conventions and agreements

Czechoslovakia has not yet concluded any bilateral or multilateral agreements on the subject of equivalences. But within the framework of bilateral

cultural conventions with other countries, the Czechoslovak universities conclude agreements of 'friendship and co-operation' with those of the other signatory, notably with the other Socialist countries. These agreements provide especially for co-operation in the solution of scientific problems, lecture tours by visiting professors, the exchange of post-graduate students and facilities for entering upon the *aspirantura*. They do not contain provisions for the reciprocal recognition of equivalences. It is taken for granted that in selecting students to be sent abroad under these agreements, their home universities will see to it that they are properly qualified.

Czechoslovakia has concluded bilateral cultural conventions with a number of countries, namely, all the Socialist countries in Europe and Asia, and with Cuba, as well as with Belgium, Bolivia, Denmark, France and Norway, and bilateral cultural agreements with Austria, Canada, Finland, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Mexico and Sweden. Besides, cultural agreements have been concluded with certain non-governmental organizations in some countries, notably the United Kingdom and the United States.

None of these latter cultural conventions and agreements, however, contains provisions for the recognition of equivalences. As in the case of the university agreements of friendship and co-operation, it is taken for granted that the countries sending students to the other contracting party can be trusted to exercise due care that they fulfil the conditions required by the receiving country. Should a student, however, prove not to be suitably equipped for the proposed course of study, the University of 17 November directs him to more appropriate courses in agreement with the embassy of his country.

Comments

Like all countries where universities and examination rules are centralized and State-controlled, and where the examination rules do not vary from one university to another, Czechoslovakia would find it easier to conclude bilateral agreements on equivalences than would the countries where this is not the case. Such agreements have, however, not yet been concluded.

As regards equivalences, the principle is the usual one: that the content of the foreign qualification must be up to the standard of the Czechoslovak qualification for which equivalence is sought. In deciding whether this is the case the Czechoslovak authorities rely on unilateral scrutiny of the foreign qualification. In general, applications are decided on their merits, but the process of scrutiny has led to a certain measure of standardization and lists have been drawn up of a number of acceptable foreign qualifications; these include qualifications from a number of non-Socialist countries.

France

The French system of higher education is characterized by a high degree of centralization at the governmental level. Recognition of foreign degrees and diplomas can be granted by authority of the government in three distinct forms: (a) official acceptance; (b) *de facto* recognition; and (c) equivalence.

Official acceptance. This form of recognition entitles the holder of an approved degree to the award of the corresponding French degree or diploma. It was instituted in 1960 by a decree which provides that qualifications obtained in foreign institutions of higher education, for which the conditions of admission, the programmes and periods of study and the examinations are the same as those for the corresponding French qualifications, can be officially accepted by French faculties.

Every year an order of the Ministry of Education, drawn up after consultation with the Board of Higher Education, establishes a list of foreign qualifications the holders of which may apply for official acceptance and states such supplementary tests, programmes and examinations as may be required of them.

Applicants must submit proof of an adequate knowledge of French. Applications are addressed to the faculty of the university of the applicant's choice competent to award the diploma for which official acceptance is sought. When the faculty has verified the dossier of the applicant, and he has taken the supplementary examinations where these are required, it awards him the French diploma corresponding to the foreign one he holds. In other words, official acceptance results in the acquisition of French diplomas.

Official acceptance has till now applied principally in the case of qualifications from universities that were formerly French, and it has ceased to be applicable when the requirements for the diploma in question no longer correspond to those of French faculties. At present the list of recognized qualifications for official acceptance contains only qualifications awarded by the Mohammed V University, Rabat, and the Federal University of Cameroon.

Official acceptance thus only applies in rare cases.

De facto *recognition.* A number of agreements between France and its former colonies establish a system whereby certain qualifications acquired from universities in these countries are recognized *de facto,* in France, provided

that they are entered in a list issued annually by order of the French Ministry of Education and published in the *Journal Officiel*.

De facto recognition means that, though applicants do not obtain the actual French diplomas corresponding to those of their own universities, the are given the same rights as regards admission to French institutions of higher education and as regards the exercise of a profession as those who are accorded official acceptance. The rights accorded by *de facto* recognition are completely effective as regards admission to French institutions of higher education and French public employment, but possibly less so in the private sector of economic life.

De facto recognition is only accorded if the foreign qualifications in question fulfil the same conditions as regards admission, time of study, programmes and examinations as the corresponding French diplomas.

The official list of qualifications awarded in 1965 and acceptable for *de facto* recognition concerns the universities of Algiers, Abidjan, Dakar and Madagascar and the Fondation de l'Enseignement Supérieur en Afrique Centrale (Brazzaville).

Equivalences. The French system of equivalences can be defined as the totality of measures permitting students who have undertaken studies and passed examinations abroad to be exempted either from part of the periods of study and the examinations required for a French diploma, or from taking a French diploma or degree required for admission to prepare for an advanced degree.

Equivalence differs from official acceptance in that those who are granted equivalence are not awarded a French diploma straight away: they must always undertake a period of study and pass examinations in France. Unlike those who are accorded *de facto* recognition, they do not, failing special legislation or regulations to the contrary, acquire the right to exercise a profession in France. But what they do get, if they have a diploma entitling them to matriculation in a university of their home country, is the same right to matriculate in a French university as that accruing from the corresponding French diploma.

Methods of establishing equivalences

International agreements are not the principal source of equivalences in France. There are a great number of cultural conventions or agreements containing provisions about equivalences and charging a mixed (binational) commission with the task of working out the application of the latter in practice. These provisions are, however, usually couched in general terms. In some cases they are more explicit, but only rarely do they go beyond the equivalence of diplomas of secondary education, i.e. school-leaving certificates and the like, leading to admission to universities.

The application of the provisions embodied in international agreements is never the result of a decision of a French university in an isolated case, but of regulations on the national level, applying to all French universities.

In fact, the rules governing equivalences are very nearly completely centralized, and the provisions of international agreements can only be implemented by means of official texts, decrees or orders, which are published in the *Journal Officiel*, and to which all faculties must conform.

The regulations governing questions of equivalence in France are principally of an internal character, i.e. they are established by decrees or orders. No equivalence may be accorded unless it is expressly authorized by a decree or an order, and no practice may be introduced that is not authorized by such government measures. Nor can faculties accord equivalences beyond those authorized in this way.

Decrees providing for equivalences are either issued pursuant to a law after consultation with the Council of State, or, more commonly, they are 'simple' decrees issued without consultation with the Council of State and signed by the Prime Minister on the basis of a recommendation from the Minister of Education and countersigned by him.

Orders can only be made by the Ministry of Education. These are usually issued pursuant to a decree. Decrees and orders relating to equivalences cannot be issued without previous consultation with the Board of Higher Education and, in certain cases, the National Education Council.

Internal regulations governing the granting of equivalences originate in various ways. In some cases they find their origin in international agreements, as described above.

In other cases, they originate in a government initiative. The central administration can, and very often does, prepare proposals to establish equivalences. This is the task of departments of the Ministry of Education, notably the Directorate of Higher Education and the Directorate of Co-operation.

Together with the relevant departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and within the framework of the general policy of the government, these departments study, and draw up proposals for, measures aimed at encouraging foreign students to come to France and at enabling French students to undertake part of their studies abroad. In the majority of cases the draft decrees and orders are submitted directly to the Board of Higher Education, but the most important ones are first transmitted to the appropriate faculties for their opinion. The role of the faculties and the Board of Higher Education in these matters is purely advisory, though the decisions taken generally conform with their advice.

Faculties may also take the initiative in proposing an equivalence to the central administration. The competent authority is the assembly of the faculty under which the subject in question belongs. Its recommendations are transmitted by the regional director of education (*recteur d'académie*) to the Directorate of Higher Education for consideration. The directorate generally consults all other interested faculties before submitting the matter to the Board of Higher Education.

Conditions governing the granting of equivalences

In principle, the equivalence of qualifications presupposes either (a) the identity of periods of study and of examinations, or (b) that the qualification is of the same level and standing as that for which equivalence is sought. It is, of course, rare that the qualifications are found to be identical (in which case the applicant may be accorded official acceptance or *de facto* recognition, as described above). In fact, identity of qualifications is practically only found in the case of certain universities that were formerly French and that have not since modified their originally French regulations.

In the vast majority of cases, it is therefore a question of whether the level and standing of the applicant's qualification are on a par with the French qualification for which he seeks equivalence. But even if the level and standing are in themselves satisfactory, he cannot obtain equivalence if the studies he has undertaken and the examinations he has passed abroad are of a very different character from those constituting the normal prerequisites for the course of study on which he proposes to embark in France. A certain measure of similarity is required; his diploma must be in the same discipline and cover the same subject areas as those required for the corresponding French qualification.

Equivalences are conferred by the faculties, by the regional director of education or by decisions of the Ministry of Education.

The faculties confer equivalences directly where these are explicitly provided for by a decree or an order, and all that is required is to ascertain whether or not the applicant possesses the foreign diploma on the strength of which he seeks equivalence.

The regional director of education confers equivalence with the French *baccalauréat*, if the foreign diploma in question is listed in an order of the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education may in many cases take individual decisions on equivalences after examining the dossier of the applicant, but only if the possibility of doing so is provided for in a law or official text.

Students of French nationality who have received the whole or part of their secondary schooling outside France because of their parents' residence abroad are admitted to French universities for purposes of preparing for any degree, provided that they hold a diploma entitling them to be admitted to a university in the foreign country in question. Lists of such recognized diplomas are published annually by the Ministry of Education. The equivalence is conferred by the regional director of education for the area in which the French university of the applicant's choice is situated. Each equivalence is made the subject of an order by the regional director, a copy of which is transmitted to the ministry.

Foreign students are admitted to French universities if they are accorded equivalence with the French *baccalauréat* for a certificate of secondary education acquired abroad and giving access to higher education in the country of origin. Lists of such recognized foreign certificates are drawn up annually

by the Ministry of Education. Foreign students cannot, however, sit for the State degrees in medicine, pharmacy or dentistry, unless they hold the diplomas required of French students as prerequisites for these degrees. But they can sit for all the other State degrees, as well as for university degrees in medicine, pharmacy and dentistry. These university qualifications have the same academic standing as the State degrees, but they do not entitle the holder to exercise his profession in France.

The above equivalences are pronounced by the regional director of education for the area in which the university of the applicant's choice is situated. Each equivalence is made the subject of a special order, and a list of these orders is transmitted monthly to the minister. In the case of certificates of education not included on the Ministry of Education list, equivalence may be accorded by the minister following consideration by the dean of the faculty or by the regional director of education.

A special entrance examination is held once a year for foreign students who do not hold qualifications acceptable in equivalence to the French *baccalauréat*.

The French paper contains a list of foreign qualifications entitling the holder to equivalence with the French *baccalauréat*. The list comprises qualifications from a total of seventy-two countries. The paper also contains an account of the specific requirements for holders of foreign qualifications who wish to take an advanced degree, especially a doctorate. It may be said that the general principle is that applicants must have undertaken studies and passed examinations equivalent to those required of French citizens, but that they may be exempted from part of the required period of study and a number of preliminary examinations.

This appraisal seeks simply to give a picture of the principles underlying the French system rather than its particulars. But in order to give some idea of the very wide scale on which France accords equivalences with foreign qualifications, the number of countries involved is indicated below.

Foreign candidates for the French State degree of doctor of science are exempted from taking the French master's degree if they have already acquired degrees recognized as being equivalent to the latter. The list of recognized qualifications for the doctorate in engineering covers a total of twenty-three countries. The corresponding list of recognized qualifications regarded as equivalent to the *licence* for the purpose of proceeding to the French State degree of doctor of law or doctor of economics includes degrees from a total of thirty-five countries.

Foreign candidates for the *licence* in French literature may, in appropriate cases, be granted equivalence for their foreign qualifications in the form of exemption from two or three of the certificates of advanced studies, including the certificate of general literary studies, required for the *licence*. Exemption from three certificates, including the certificate of general literary studies, is only accorded to candidates who hold a qualification recognized as equivalent to the *licence ès lettres*, for the purpose of proceeding to a State doctorate.

Candidates for the State degree of doctor of letters are exempted from first acquiring the French master's degree if they hold a foreign qualification recognized as equivalent to the latter for this purpose.

Comments

The most striking feature of the French system of equivalences is its very high degree of centralization and systematization.

Equivalences are never accorded individually and on the merits of a single case, but always on the basis of legal instruments like laws, decrees and orders. Measures to establish equivalences are always government measures, and the final resort is always an organ of the central administration, notably the Ministry of Education.

This has permitted a very large measure of standardization, and a great number of foreign qualifications from many countries are officially listed as equivalent to the corresponding French qualifications. In consequence, the granting authority can often confine itself to making sure that applicants really possess the qualifications they claim to have.

Federal Republic of Germany

Cultural affairs (which include education) are the responsibility of the *Länder* of the Federal Republic of Germany. Article 5 of its Constitution guarantees full liberty of research and teaching to the universities. In principle they have the right to establish their own examination rules, but the examinations that give access to the exercise of certain professions (including medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, law and the higher levels of the teaching profession) are subject to State control on grounds of public interest. There is, moreover, close co-operation through the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education of the *Länder*, and the degrees and diplomas awarded in the *Länder* are valid throughout the Federal Republic.

Methods of establishing equivalences

No examination regulations contain explicit definitions of the conditions for the recognition of foreign qualifications, though nearly all of them contain provisions, in general terms, to the effect that foreign qualifications may be recognized if they are deemed to be equivalent to those acquired at German universities. The decision in individual cases rests with the authorities expressly designated in the various examination regulations.

In cases of doubt, the application is submitted for an opinion to the Central Office for Problems Connected with Education Abroad, which possesses a large body of relevant documentation. Its advice, however, is not binding on either State or academic authorities. In general, the practice of universities in dealing with applications for recognition of foreign qualifications is liberal.

As regards the doctorate, most universities of the Federal Republic of Germany require candidates to spend at least two semesters in the university in question. There are no rules specifying in which university the applicant must have received his previous training, and there are no cases on record of a candidate being refused on the ground that he has studied abroad.

In the years immediately after the Second World War, it was felt that some universities had been unduly liberal in dealing with applications for equivalence and, in order to facilitate a more co-ordinated and rational treatment of such matters, recommendations regarding the recognition of the qualifications of foreign candidates for the doctorate of the Federal Republic of

Germany were drawn up by a committee consisting of university experts and of representatives of the West German Rectors' Conference, the German University Exchange Office and the Central Office for Problems Connected with Education Abroad. These recommendations are now followed by most faculties.

According to the regulations based on these recommendations, foreign bachelor's degrees must be supplemented in universities of the Federal Republic of Germany, the requirements varying according to a classification of the foreign degree in question; while holders of master's degrees in some subjects (e.g. in technology, science and economics) can present themselves as candidates for the doctorate of the Federal Republic of Germany on the strength of their home degrees, provided that they satisfy the following (summarized) conditions: (a) the candidate must produce evidence that he is entitled to prepare for a doctorate in his home country; (b) his master's thesis must be equivalent to a *Diplomarbeit* (Master of Engineering), or, failing this, he must undertake a *Diplomarbeit*; (c) he must pass a test of proficiency in his proposed subject at the *Diplomprüfung* (Master of Arts) level; (d) he must spend a minimum of two semesters at the university of his choice in the Federal Republic of Germany.

In assessing the content of foreign qualifications, the universities of the Federal Republic of Germany have recourse to the information that they themselves and the Central Office for Problems Connected with Education Abroad possess about foreign curricula and examination rules, including the number of terms that the applicant has spent in his home university.

As for degrees below that of the doctorate, the general rule is that the faculties make their own examination regulations for the degrees of *Magister* (master's degree) and for the *Diplom* (first degree), which are then sanctioned by the Ministry of Education. A joint committee of the West German Rectors' Conference and the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education has, however, initiated a plan to co-ordinate study and examination regulations. Small groups of experts within the universities are working out model curricula and examination rules for the guidance of the faculties, including provision for the recognition of foreign qualifications. It is intended that the totality of these model arrangements should result in clearly defined regulations likely to make it obligatory for periods of study abroad to be assessed and credited. However, it is not the purpose of examination regulations themselves to determine which foreign universities are equivalent; this can only be done in individual cases.

The model regulations for the master's degree in faculties of philosophy (arts) thus state that study in a foreign university which is recognized as equivalent may be credited in full, on the recommendation of the competent member of the faculty.

The practical procedure in dealing with applications for the recognition of foreign qualifications varies from university to university. Reference is made to Document 129/1961 of the West German Rectors' Conference, which enumerates the relevant authorities in so far as these have adopted

rules regarding equivalences, and gives some indication of the steps that foreign applicants must take in order to obtain recognition.[1]

Bilateral and multilateral conventions and agreements

The only multilateral arrangements relevant for the Federal Republic of Germany, apart from the Council of Europe Convention on the Equivalence of Diplomas Leading to Admission to Universities (school-leaving certificates and the like) are two Council of Europe conventions: one on the Academic Recognition of University Qualifications of 1959 (at the time of writing not yet ratified by the Federal Republic of Germany) and one on Periods of Study at Foreign Universities, of 1956 (ratified), which deals with the obligations of the students' home universities in connexion with studies undertaken abroad. The provisions of these two conventions merely represent a codification of existing practice in the Federal Republic.

The bilateral arrangement recently effected between the Federal Republic of Germany and France is of particular interest in the present context, more especially as regards the method by which it was prepared; this may well serve as a model for other countries. It does not take the form of a convention, but consists in the exchange of unilateral undertakings, worked out on a bilateral basis. The method adopted is as follows: for a number of subjects, working groups, each consisting of one expert from the Federal Republic of Germany and one expert from France, are appointed by the Franco-German Rectors' Conference. Each of these makes a comparative study of curricula and makes proposals for equivalences. These are then submitted to the holders of the relevant university chairs for comment and in their final form are embodied in a set of formal rulings on equivalences, which, in the Federal Republic of Germany, the universities are invited to adopt.

This process has been completed in the fields of the Classical, Romance and Germanic languages. At the time of writing, it is approaching completion in the fields of physics, chemistry and biology and is continuing in economics, agriculture and a number of technological fields.

A similar arrangement between the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy is at present in preparation.

1. The paper of the Federal Republic of Germany does not deal with the equivalence of *Reifezeugnis*—secondary-school leaving certificates leading to matriculation—but a footnote briefly mentions the following points: these matters belong under the ministries of education of the individual *Länder*, which are guided by recommendations from the Central Office for Problems Connected with Education Abroad. The Federal Republic of Germany has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Equivalence of Diplomas Leading to Admission to Universities (which provides for the recognition of such foreign qualifications, subject to the reservation that the receiving university may require a supplementary examination in subjects not included in the applicant's national qualification, as well as a test of proficiency in the national language of the receiving country).

There is a written agreement between the Conference of West German Ministers of Education and the West German Rectors' Conference to the effect that formal equivalence commitments with other countries shall only be entered into on the basis of a prior study by the rectors' conference of the scholarly and scientific content of the qualifications involved.

The paper of the Federal Republic of Germany expresses the conviction that, with the very varied pattern of European university systems, rules for the equivalence of foreign qualifications can only satisfactorily be established bilaterally by the method adopted in preparing the Franco-German agreement, but that this method, by creating a network of bilateral agreements, could well lead to multilateralism.

Comments

This is no doubt correct, as far as it goes, but the paper of the Federal Republic envisages the problem chiefly in terms of European conditions. The university systems of the whole world, of course, present an even more varied pattern than those of Europe. It is, moreover, clear that the Franco-German agreement must have involved very great labour and consumed much time. To extend this procedure bilaterally to university systems all over the world would appear to be a superhuman task.

The demand that candidates for a doctorate must spend a specified period in the university of their choice in the Federal Republic is no doubt analogous to the practice of many other countries, and must be described as entirely reasonable. In universities (such as those of Denmark) that do not require writers of doctoral theses to be in full residence, this requirement is actually indispensable because, in the absence of this rule, they would risk being flooded with theses refused by the writers' home universities, and the practice might even arise of such applicants going the rounds of such universities with refused theses, to try their luck. (This problem cropped up in the preparation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Academic Recognition of University Qualification. The difficulty was surmounted by adopting the *wording* that qualifications acquired at a foreign university shall 'entitle the holder to pursue further university studies in a foreign university and sit for academic examinations on completion of such studies with a view to proceeding to a further degree, including that of a doctorate, on the same conditions as those applicable to nationals . . .'.)

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

The attitude of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the problem of equivalences is governed by the consideration that international co-operation in cultural, scientific and technological fields is an important aspect of the peaceful coexistence of States with different economic systems, and by the belief that the increase of such co-operation, the progress of technology and the existence of differences between national methods of training key specialists—especially in newly independent countries—make it necessary to solve, on an international legal basis, the problems of defining the qualifications of specialists and of standardizing diplomas attesting to specific qualifications.

This was the starting-point of an inquiry into diploma and degree equivalences undertaken by the U.S.S.R. Government, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education and the universities. The term adopted was *nostrifikacija*; this means recognizing a foreign specialist, scientific or teaching qualification, or giving it equivalent status with a Soviet qualification in accordance with an international convention or agreement signed, on behalf of the State, by governmental or public administrative bodies which issue certificates to trained personnel with due regard to national standards in the various branches of science and technology and the requirements prescribed in each country for obtaining such qualifications.

The problem of the equivalence of diplomas and degrees is not merely a product of modern conditions. It has a fairly long history, in the light of which the present position must be seen.

Methods of establishing equivalences

In the old Russian Empire, questions of equivalence were dealt with by the Council of the Ecclesiastical Academy, and later on by the councils of universities and technological institutions and by the Ministry of Education.

After the Revolution, a statute on institutions of higher education, adopted by the Council of People's Commissars in 1922, provided for the comparative evaluation of foreign qualifications to be undertaken by the councils of institutions of higher education, subject to ratification by the Central Bureau for Professional Training of the People's Commissariat for Education, account being taken of the applicant's previous studies.

Questions of the equivalence of foreign qualifications were made the concern of the councils of institutions of higher education because at that time periods of study abroad occupied an important place in the training of key personnel and in the further training of Soviet scientists.

In practice, the evaluation and attestation of qualifications of key scientific and teaching personnel in the various republics of the Soviet Union were also the subject of individual decisions taken by the State Academic Council, by qualifications commissions, by the People's Commissariats for Education in the republics and by the Supreme Commission on Certificates, which dealt with the recognition of certificates issued by foreign institutions.

After the regulation on academic degrees and titles, issued by the U.S.S.R. Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom) in March 1937, the Supreme Commission on Certificates authorized persons with foreign degrees to petition councils entitled to accept theses for the award of a Soviet degree, to permit the award of a degree without the obligation of defending a thesis. The ruling as to which particular Soviet degree should be conferred was made by the council on the basis of the applicant's published work.

The decisions of the Supreme Commission on Certificates thus exempted scientific workers with foreign degrees from the general terms of the regulation. Foreign candidates were able to defend theses for degrees in the U.S.S.R. on the same basis as Soviet citizens.

In 1940 and after the Second World War the question of the official recognition of foreign qualifications again assumed importance when it became necessary to assess the qualifications awarded by university institutions in those western provinces which had not formerly been part of the Soviet Union, as well as those of former Russian citizens of foreign nationality who returned to the Soviet Union after 1945. The large number of cases led to the adoption of a somewhat modified procedure. Questions of equivalence were now dealt with by the council of the university or other institution of higher education concerned, the final decision resting with the Supreme Commission on Certificates. The councils took account of the curricula covered by applicants and of the number of hours devoted to lectures and practical work, as well as of all relevant diplomas and degrees acquired abroad.

In recent years the large number of foreigners coming to the Soviet Union to pursue studies in institutions of higher education and to prepare post-graduate and doctoral theses (see below) has made it necessary to exercise particular care in determining criteria for the establishment of equivalences.

Assessment of academic standards reached in different countries

The best approach was found to be through an assessment of the level reached by the applicant in his specialized training, which would give some idea of his scholarship and mastery of research methods. This entailed much

investigation, including a comparison of courses in different countries, more especially with regard to the aggregate time of study and to the knowledge and skills acquired. The broadest indicators were found to be: an enumeration of the subjects taken (with an indication of the number of hours of study); the amount of practical work done within the academic institution or in industry; and a statement of the tests and examinations taken.

As university systems vary considerably from country to country, it was decided to confine the present study to the following countries: the United States of America (together with Japan), the United Kingdom and Eastern Germany. Their systems of higher education were compared with that of the Soviet Union.

The U.S.S.R. paper in Part I describes this procedure of scrutiny and comparison in considerable detail. However, as the United States and the United Kingdom are dealt with in other sections of this paper, the following summary of the Soviet inquiry is confined to its findings as regards the 'equivalence' or 'non-equivalence' of qualifications from these countries when compared with those of the U.S.S.R., and to an outline of the Soviet pattern of curricula and examinations.

Comparison with the United States of America. While the bachelor's degree in the United States presupposes a four-year course of study, Soviet students graduate after courses of at least five years. It is concluded that, after completing four of the required five years, Soviet students have attained the same level as students holding the degree of bachelor from United States universities, and that, consequently, the standard represented by graduation in the U.S.S.R. is higher than that represented by an American bachelor's degree.

In Soviet universities the period of study for the basic diploma (*diplom ob okončanii vysšego učebnogo zavedenija*) is the same as for the master's degree in the United States. The diploma project required of Soviet students corresponds to an American thesis for a master's degree, though in some cases it is profounder in content. For example, the great majority of theses in the Faculty of Chemistry of Moscow State University are immediately printed and published.[1]

Comparison has shown that, the period of study being the same and the examination requirements being nearly identical in American and Soviet universities, the standard of specialists is much the same in both countries, the only difference being that the U.S.S.R. has no equivalent to the American intermediate stage of the bachelor's degree. It is therefore deemed that the qualifications of students graduating from Soviet institutions of higher education at university level are approximately on a par with those represented by the American master's degree.

1. The defence of diploma work in the U.S.S.R. takes place before a State examining board appointed by the Minister of Higher Education. The ministry also prescribes the general requirements for diploma projects. These are the same for all the institutions of higher education.

The first academic or higher degree in the U.S.S.R. is that of *kandidat nauk* (candidate of science). This can be taken in a wide variety of subjects and the conditions of award are much the same in all cases. During a period of three to four years, the post-graduate student must pass three examinations (in his special field, in philosophy and in a foreign language). In his field of specialization he must possess a thorough grasp of the subject or subjects involved up to the standard required of a qualified teacher in an institution of higher education. While preparing for these examinations, he also works on his thesis, which must demonstrate original research and theoretical and practical competence. The writing of the thesis entails three to four years of post-graduate work, usually in continuation of studies undertaken before graduation. It has to be defended publicly, and its basic conclusions must be published in scientific periodicals.

The requirements for the U.S.S.R. degree of *kandidat* are considered to correspond to those for the American degree of doctor of science and the two are deemed to be equivalent.

There is no American degree corresponding to the Soviet degree of doctor of science, which is a qualification of exceptionally high standing normally awarded only to scholars who already hold senior academic or research posts.

In connexion with the study of American qualifications, note was also taken of the *Japanese* universities, which now follow a system having much in common with the American university system. The principal example cited is a comparison between the qualifications acquired by students of geology in the State University of Kyoto and in the Moscow State University. The specialist qualifications of bachelors of science at Kyoto were found to be much below those of Moscow graduates, while the standard of holders of the Kyoto master's degree in geology was found to be comparable to that of Soviet graduates. (The higher professional standard of Soviet graduates in geology was due to the fact that part of the time spent in preparing for degrees at Kyoto was devoted to subjects other than geology—for example, literature and history.)

A sample test of a doctorate thesis at Kyoto showed that its subject would meet the requirements for a Moscow degree of *kandidat*.

The conclusions drawn are that in the Japanese State universities, following the American system, holders of master's degrees are comparable to Soviet graduates, while the doctorate is on the level of the Soviet *kandidat* of science.

The criteria elaborated for assessing United States qualifications are also applied to other countries where the university system is similar to the American system.

Comparison with the United Kingdom. Owing to variations between individual British universities it was not found possible to establish complete and exact comparisons between British and Soviet qualifications. However, an assessment of the general level of graduates led to the conclusion that the standard of students taking the British master's degree (as a first higher degree) was on a par with that of Soviet graduates.

As regards British doctorates, it was found that, though the requirements for testing a thesis for a doctorate of philosophy are less rigorous than those for a thesis for the Soviet degree of *kandidat*, the British doctorate of philosophy could be taken as equivalent to the Soviet degree of *kandidat* of science, and the British degrees of doctor of science and doctor of letters were regarded as being of higher standing. There was no British degree corresponding to the Soviet degree of doctor of science.

Comparison with Eastern Germany. A number of features were noted, including the following points relating to post-graduate studies.

The system of training exhibits a number of peculiarities stemming from older German traditions. Persons who have completed courses of higher education are accepted as post-graduate students directly upon graduation or after completing practical work. To complete post-graduate studies they must pass examinations in special subjects assigned by a supervisor. There is no official syllabus for post-graduate examinations nor any strict ruling on the time to be taken on the preparation of the thesis; the time may vary from three to five years. The thesis must be defended publicly. Publication of the thesis is not required, but an abstract is sent to research institutes, industrial concerns and leading specialists. Successful defence of the thesis leads to the award of a doctorate in science, philosophy, engineering, etc.

Comparison with the corresponding Soviet qualifications showed that the training of key personnel in Eastern Germany is much the same as in the Soviet Union. The East German doctorate was deemed to be equivalent to the Soviet degree of *kandidat* of science, and the *Habilitation* is accepted as corresponding to the Soviet degree of doctor of science.

Internal regulations

It will thus be seen that the granting of equivalences by the U.S.S.R. is founded on a comparison of the basic regulations governing the organization of studies in the foreign institutions of higher education in question with those of the Soviet Union.

On the basis of a comparative analysis of data supplied by those Soviet universities which have foreign students, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education issued an order in 1964 ratifying the regulations dealing with the status of foreign citizens studying in institutions of higher education and in research institutions in the U.S.S.R. The general tenor of the provisions contained in these regulations may be gathered from the following quotations. The provisions are the same for foreign and Soviet students:

> Any student who has satisfied all the requirements of the curriculum and syllabus shall be entitled to defend a diploma project [thesis] or sit for State examinations.

Any student who has passed the State examinations or successfully defended a diploma project [thesis] shall, at the discretion of the State examining board, be recognized as having qualified in the subject in which he has specialized and shall be awarded a diploma ... accompanied ... by an appendix listing the subjects studied and indicating the examination marks obtained in each one.

Paragraph 18 of the regulations deals with the official recognition of foreign diplomas and contains the principles governing the establishment of equivalences between Soviet and American institutions of higher education.

Bilateral and multilateral conventions and agreements

Practice shows that the Soviet approach to the equivalence problem is acceptable to the other Socialist countries. This is borne out by a number of conventions and agreements with them, dealing with the training of key specialists and other high-level personnel.

The first of these agreements was concluded in 1956 with Eastern Germany, and deals with the exchange of undergraduates and post-graduate students. The agreement gives specific recognition to specialist and teaching qualifications, in line with the domestic legislation of the signatories. A similar agreement with Czechoslovakia was signed in 1957, and was subsequently followed by agreements with all the other People's Democracies.

The cultural agreement between the U.S.S.R. and Italy, signed in 1962, contains no specific provisions about official recognition of equivalences but both parties undertake to study the question with a view to establishing them.

The U.S.S.R. paper concludes by expressing the conviction that, since the U.S.S.R. has evolved fairly clear methods, an over-all solution of the equivalence problem appears to be within easy reach.

Comments

The equivalence question has been of particular importance to the U.S.S.R. because this country attracts a great many foreign students, and also because in the early 1920s, and again immediately after 1945, it needed to assess a considerable number of degrees and diplomas awarded by universities and institutions of higher education in other countries. The U.S.S.R. therefore seems to be well on the way towards the establishment of standardized equivalences for qualifications acquired in a number of countries.

It appears, in fact, to be in a position where the recognition of equivalences can be regarded as not only, and not even chiefly, a concession to other countries, but largely as being in the interests of the receiving country itself. Indeed, the Soviet reply largely deals with the problem in terms of key personnel, which would appear to indicate a particular interest in applicants who wish to complete their advanced studies in the U.S.S.R.

United Kingdom

All the universities of the United Kingdom are entirely autonomous, and each of them is free to determine the nature and level of academic qualifications required from candidates for admission, whether from the United Kingdom or from abroad. In consequence, the government cannot undertake commitments in this field on their behalf, and formal bilateral or multilateral agreements about equivalences could only be concluded, if at all, if it had previously obtained their assent.[1]

It is not the practice of British universities to recognize the equivalence of any academic qualification as such; they always consider such qualifications in relation to specific applications for admission.

Conditions governing the granting of equivalences

The need to recognize equivalences between qualifications acquired abroad and those acquired in the United Kingdom arises essentially at two levels: (a) in the case of students from abroad who wish to follow courses leading to a first degree or diploma, i.e. at the undergraduate level; and (b) in the case of those who wish to do advanced work, by way of either research or post-graduate study, leading to a higher degree or diploma.

University admission requirements for first-degree courses. As regards admission to a first-degree course (i.e. in most cases the admission of school-leavers) the applicant must have passed an examination that satisfies the minimum academic requirements of the university in question. The universities normally rely on the results of examinations for the General Certificate of Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and the Scottish Certificate of Education in Scotland. These examinations are conducted by a number of approved examination bodies and university minimum entrance requirements are normally prescribed in terms of the subjects which the

1. In order to enable the United Kingdom to adhere to the two Council of Europe conventions on university subjects (for further particulars of which see below), it was necessary to include in them special provisions for countries where the universities are not subject to State control: the commitments of these countries consist solely in bringing the provisions of the conventions to the notice of their universities and using their best endeavours to induce acceptance of them.

applicant must have taken and the levels at which passes must be obtained. They vary to some extent from university to university.

The above constitutes the general academic requisite, but admission also depends on a number of additional factors.

Thus many faculties and departments require that particular subjects shall have been included in the examination for the General Certificate, and they may also stipulate the level at which they must be taken—'advanced' as opposed to 'ordinary'. Furthermore, the fact that there are normally more applicants than available university places generally results in competition between candidates for entrance, and this may raise the effective standard of attainment above that formally prescribed.

At Cambridge and Oxford there is the further complication that students can only become members of the university by being admitted to a college or hall (or one of the non-collegiate bodies). Many of the colleges make admission dependent on the passing of an entrance examination, though they may accept particularly well-qualified candidates without this test.

As regards the admission of candidates educated abroad, decisions also rest wholly with the individual university, except that in certain cases there exists a single matriculation authority covering a group of universities (the Joint Matriculation Board for the universities of Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield; and the Scottish Universities Entrance Board for the universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St. Andrews).

A very full summary of the requirements of individual universities is printed in Appendix III to the 1966 edition of the *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook*. An introductory note to the latter sums up the situation as follows:

'Various other qualifications [than those mentioned above] are specified by different universities as being acceptable, under certain conditions, for admission purposes.... Passes in the matriculation examinations of overseas universities and the school leaving examinations of overseas countries would also normally be accepted, provided a satisfactory standard in English has been achieved. The University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate conducts examinations specially for overseas candidates, and awards an Oversea School Certificate and an Oversea Higher School Certificate. Passes in these examinations are normally accepted as equivalent to passes in GCE examinations . . .'

This summary is, however, a generalization which disregards some variation in individual practice. The United Kingdom paper cites two instances of such variations, Bristol and Essex.

The regulations of the University of Bristol, after listing a number of approved examination qualifications, state that candidates educated abroad may be declared eligible for admission if they submit evidence of having passed elsewhere examinations equal to those listed as approved, and of ability to follow instruction in English, but add: 'It is not the university's practice to give specific recognition of qualifications awarded in other coun-

tries. The requirement above makes it possible to admit candidates who may be recommended by a department of the university for admission.'

The regulations of the University of Essex indicate that its entrance requirements may be satisfied by *inter alia* 'a degree of another university in the United Kingdom and of such other universities as may be approved for this purpose', and contain also the statement that certain applicants may be declared eligible for selection for admission if they have passed examinations considered by the university to be equivalent to those listed as approved, though the examinations in question should normally include English language, a foreign language and a mathematical or scientific subject. Applicants may also be eligible for selection for admission if they 'have obtained a matriculation certificate awarded by an overseas university . . . approved for this purpose'.

Though the practice is thus seen to vary from university to university, the general situation may be summed up as follows.

The general entrance requirements can be satisfied by other means than the passing of a United Kingdom examination, and it is the usual practice of British universities so to frame their regulations as to permit them to consider foreign qualifications for this purpose. On the other hand, applicants for matriculation, whether from the United Kingdom or from abroad, must normally also satisfy certain specific requirements for a particular course of study in a given university. In other words, neither appropriate passes in the General Certificate of Education, nor foreign equivalents of the latter, give the right to matriculate. In the case of foreign equivalents, it is difficult to separate the two forms of requirement mentioned below, because the university in question will often make a single assessment as to whether a candidate is (a) formally eligible for matriculation, and (b) qualified to enter upon his chosen course of study. Indeed, its decision on (a) may depend on (b).

The assessment of the suitability of an applicant entails an appraisal, normally by the head of the department concerned, of the content of the course leading to the matriculation qualification he holds, the academic standard of the qualification and its relevance to the course of study upon which he desires to enter. This appraisal will be based both upon the available factual information, either in published form or ascertainable from the various agencies in the United Kingdom with special knowledge in the relevant field, and on the accumulated experience of the university in question with regard to such qualifications.

Some universities may in some subjects grant exemption from the first year of a three-year degree course to suitably qualified candidates, especially if they already hold a degree in the same subject; but there is no general provision in the United Kingdom universities for the transfer of 'credits' in respect of courses taken at another university. It may be taken that all United Kingdom universities will require students to attend at least two of the three years of the course.

University admission requirements for post-graduate study or research. As regards equivalences of candidates from abroad who wish to enter a British university for post-graduate study or research, the situation is much the same as for those who desire to be admitted to courses leading to a first degree. In this field, too, matters are entirely within the discretion of the individual universities, and it is not their practice to recognize the degree of any university as automatically entitling the holder to admission as a post-graduate student.[1]

All applications, from graduates either of United Kingdom universities or of universities abroad, are considered on their merits by the receiving university. In so doing, the latter takes account of the applicant's first degree and assesses his suitability for the course of study or research proposed, as well as considering: whether such a course could be satisfactorily pursued in the university of his choice; whether the desired line of research could be fitted in with the latter's research activities and facilities; and whether adequate supervision could be provided from among its staff. As the number of places is usually limited, it is also necessary to assess the applicant's ability in relation to other applicants for admission.

In a number of universities the regulations state that in order to be admitted the candidate must be a graduate of an 'approved' or 'recognized' university. In practice, however, universities do not maintain lists of universities 'approved' for this purpose. Acceptance of an applicant as a post-graduate student constitutes 'approval', for the purposes of his application, of his home university. Candidates for higher degrees in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science are normally required to possess qualifications registrable with the relevant professional bodies.

Though it is not a general practice, the regulations of some United Kingdom universities make provision for a qualifying examination in certain cases. The circumstances in which such examinations are used vary from university to university. Thus, evidence of an adequate standard of spoken and written English may in some instances be required, sometimes in the form of an examination conducted overseas. In some universities a candidate wishing to pursue research in a subject that did not form a substantial part of the course for his first degree may have to pass a preliminary examination before he is accepted. In cases of doubt as to the suitability of a candidate, whether from the United Kingdom or from abroad, it is not unusual for universities to require him to register for a probationary period, generally one year. In some cases, a qualifying examination may be imposed at the end of the first year. Finally, it is often a requirement that a candidate for a

1. It should be added that, in the experience of the present writer, foreign graduates who intend to carry on independent research work in a British university town, e.g. with a view to preparing theses for their home universities, and who wish to become members of the United Kingdom university in question (e.g. for the sake of the contacts with university life this would enable them to gain), usually find no difficulty in obtaining matriculation.

doctorate should register in the first instance as a candidate for the master's degree or a post-graduate diploma.

Multilateral conventions and agreements

The United Kingdom has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Equivalence of Diplomas Leading to Admission to Universities (1953), the signatories to which undertake to recognize entrance qualifications awarded by their co-signatories where admission to their universities is subject to State control. As this is not the case in the United Kingdom, the only commitment involved for it was that the government should transmit the text to the universities and use its best endeavours to obtain their acceptance of its provisions. The government, through the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, has duly brought this convention to the notice of the universities. The United Kingdom paper refers to Appendix III of the 1966 edition of the *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook* to indicate the extent to which the requirements of the universities are consistent with the principles embodied in the convention, but it may be doubted whether the latter has had any appreciable influence on their practice.

The United Kingdom is also a signatory to the Council of Europe Convention on the Academic Recognition of University Qualifications (1959), the principal provision of which is that the holder of a foreign university qualification shall be entitled to 'pursue further university studies . . . and sit for academic examinations on completion of such studies with a view to proceeding to a further degree, including that of a doctorate, on the same conditions as those applicable to nationals of the Contracting Party, where admission to such studies . . . depends upon the possession of a similar national university qualification' [Article 3, 2(a)].

Like the Council of Europe Convention on the Equivalence of Diplomas Leading to Admission to Universities, this convention contains an escape clause for countries, like the United Kingdom, where the government cannot enter into commitments binding on the universities within its territory. The only commitment involved for the United Kingdom Government was, therefore, to transmit the text of the convention to British universities and to use its best endeavours to obtain their agreement to apply the principles laid down in it.

Accordingly the United Kingdom Government, through the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, brought the convention to the notice of United Kingdom universities. Subject to the understanding that the reference in Article 3, 2(a) to 'the same conditions as those applicable to nationals of the Contracting Party' meant, in the case of the United Kingdom, that each case would be considered on its merits, and that no qualification would in itself suffice to secure admission, there was a general intimation of willingness on the part of the universities to accept the provisions of Article 3, 2(a), as well as Article 4 (which permits the contracting parties to demand

a supplementary examination in cases where the foreign qualification does not include certain subjects included in the national qualification, and to require applicants to pass a test in the official language of the receiving country). The latter provisions are, indeed, consistent with the practice of British universities.

The interpretation thus put on the most important section of the convention [Article 3, 2(a)] is warranted by the wording of the article, and provides a very ingenious way of bringing the United Kingdom universities within the orbit of this convention, though this reading can hardly have been intended by those who drafted it.

Comments

It is more difficult to give a clear-cut picture of the attitude of United Kingdom universities to the problem of equivalence than of those of most other countries. The one general statement that can be made without qualification is that they all accept the principle that foreign qualifications can be recognized as equivalent to their own, and that they do recognize them in a great number of cases, though often only when supplemented in various ways which differ from university to university.

Both the very varied picture presented by the regulations of United Kingdom universities with regard to equivalences, and the care that is devoted to the scrutiny of individual applications, are no doubt due to several causes. One is the very strong tradition of independence in the British university world. Another is the traditional British preference for pragmatic methods—a tradition of tackling individual cases as they arise, and of dealing with them on their merits, rather than applying hard-and-fast rules. Furthermore, the problem involves practical difficulties because of the very large number of overseas students who wish to go to United Kingdom universities, and who have to be selected in competition with United Kingdom students owing to the scarcity of university places—a factor which necessitates great care in the evaluation of individual candidates for admission.

United States of America

The university system in the United States comprises both private and public (state and municipal) institutions. In the country as a whole there is a fairly even balance between the two types as regards number and prestige.

State control of higher education has seldom been attempted, and never accomplished. The universities and other academic bodies are completely autonomous in the matter of recognition of degrees.

The methods used in assessing foreign qualifications are the same as those used in assessing American qualifications.

As a consequence of its autonomy, a United States university, though it may consult other United States institutions, academic or professional associations and government agencies, is not bound to follow their advice. It would be possible for it to conclude an agreement with another United States or foreign university for the reciprocal recognition of qualifications, but this is not usually done.

The public financing of elementary and secondary education has resulted in a considerable degree of control by the states at these levels. But in all the states there is, and probably will remain, a great deal of local diversity in the curricula of the schools.

Methods of establishing equivalences

It was therefore necessary for the institutions of higher education to establish standards of admission. In so doing they rely largely on a system of 'accreditation', i.e. a classification of schools whose leaving diplomas are found acceptable as a condition of matriculation.

About a century ago, accreditation began to develop at two levels. At the lower level, universities began to recognize certain secondary schools, so that holders of their school-leaving diplomas were given preference for purposes of matriculation, and sometimes exempted from qualifying tests required for admission. At the higher level, some of the best universities operating graduate divisions organized the Association of American Universities (AAU), for the purpose, *inter alia*, of improving standards of preparation for graduate studies.

Even today, however, the AAU has only about fifty members. For a time it published lists of colleges and universities which it had approved, but about the time of the Second World War it ceased its activities in connexion with

accreditation, leaving the field to six regional bodies and various professional organizations which by that time were rapidly taking over the work of accreditation.

The regional associations are voluntary bodies. Their members include both institutions of higher education and secondary schools. They normally evaluate the entire programme of the institution in question. Originally, some of them considered only institutions that featured an arts and science programme, but now many of them also deal with institutions whose programmes have a professional emphasis.

In addition to the regional associations, certain professional bodies have formed their own accrediting associations, sometimes to stress standards above and beyond those emphasized by the regional associations, and sometimes because the latter have been found to disregard fields of special interest to the profession in question. Some of the strongest professional associations enforce extremely high standards for accreditation. Among the others there is a great diversity of standards.

In deciding whether to accept a candidate for admission, the United States universities try to make an over-all estimate of his ability, and his official credentials are only one of the elements on which this estimate is based. In some cases they may admit an applicant whose qualifications are obscure, to enter upon a trial programme.

Information about the applicant's suitability is normally sought and evaluated under the following headings:

1. The accreditation and reputation of the institution where he has received his previous education.
2. The type and content of the programme he has completed, especially in his major field (or in prerequisites for the kind of study he proposes to undertake).
3. His grades and grade average. These may be analysed in various ways.
4. His standing in certain required tests (aptitude tests, subject tests or highly specialized aptitude and personality tests for special purposes).
5. Recommendations from teachers under whom he has studied. Here the reputations of the teachers are also taken into account.
6. Interviews.

The six types of information, in so far as they are available, are required whether the applicant is American or foreign. As, however, there are certain complications in obtaining the information on foreign students, the actual practice with regard to the six items must be explained in some detail.

1. The standing of an institution. In the United States this is a very important factor in the present context. The system is competitive: in general the best qualified students from the most reputed institutions are selected for admission to the most reputed graduate schools. These hierarchies, however, are not fixed and are not invariably the decisive factor. All the student's qualifications are considered, and even colleges and graduate schools with very high prestige will now and then accept particularly qualified students coming from

institutions of only nominal standing. Such students are selected on the basis of grades, tests, recommendations, etc.

When it comes to determining the standing of a foreign institution, the evaluator must fall back on its international reputation plus whatever information he can gather from reference books and personal contacts, as well as from the candidate's application and correspondence with him. Here again, the student from the stronger institution is the one most likely to be accepted.

A graduate of an American institution that is not listed as accredited is either given no consideration at all, or is required to take examinations to establish the equivalence of his previous education. Since accreditation does not exist in most foreign countries, the admissions officer must improvise some substitute for it. Foreign government-supported universities and the better-known private universities are usually treated on a par with American accredited institutions of higher education.

When it comes to foreign institutions that are not universities, the American evaluator often finds it difficult to decide whether to accept them as accredited. He will then often take the easy way of accepting as accredited those institutions that are listed in well-known reference books. Institutions not so listed are likely to be treated as non-accredited unless specific favourable information is available from other official, public or professional sources. Many American institutions follow the practice of asking the United States Office of Education (USOE) for information if the foreign institution is not listed anywhere.

Altogether, what the American universities are most interested in is the identification of the top-quality institutions in each country, and the encouragement of students from these institutions to study in the United States.

2. *The programme completed.* At the undergraduate level, American colleges and universities strongly prefer students whose secondary-school training has emphasized languages, mathematics and science, and they do not hold that specialization in applied subjects (such as commerce, etc.) in the secondary school constitutes sufficient preparation for higher education. Most of them therefore limit their selection of foreign undergraduates to those who have completed the secondary-school programme required for entrance to arts or science faculties in their home countries.

As regards admission to graduate study, the general principle is that the applicant is judged by the adequacy of his undergraduate preparation for the studies he proposes to undertake. Professional schools such as those of medicine, dentistry and optometry require a quite specific series of pre-professional courses in an accredited institution.

Admission is generally granted to an applicant only in a field in which he has completed studies in a full undergraduate major subject, at an institution that is not only accredited, but also known to be well staffed and well equipped to teach in the subject field.

This causes some complications where the applicant comes from a foreign university. The programmes of foreign universities are usually much more specialized than the typical undergraduate programmes of American universities, but this does not imply that all such foreign applicants have completed undergraduate studies in a major subject, as understood in the United States. The foreign programme may, for example, be too restricted to support American graduate study, or the candidate's studies may have emphasized theoretical aspects of a subject but not practical work.

What is most frequently lacking is a prerequisite subject or a supporting minor subject. Evaluators find it difficult to determine whether a foreign applicant satisfies American requirements, even if he wants to go on with the same speciality as in his home university. If a student wishes to change his speciality, or even his general field—as often happens—it is likely to make him virtually ineligible for admission to the field he has indicated.

If the applicant wants to enter for a professional programme in the United States, a scrutiny is made of the institutions and programmes he has attended at home and these are compared with corresponding ones in the United States. If it is found that the programme taken abroad is at a lower level of the educational system, or that its content is not up to the required standard, or that it has been taught by faculty members of inadequate educational background, or with a serious shortage of time and equipment, he will probably be rejected, or will be classified at a lower level or as a non-degree student.

3. Grades and their interpretation. Grades—the devices by which professors express their judgement of the level reached by students—are generally regarded as the most readily available measure of a student's performance in competition with his peers. Virtually every course in an American university is graded, usually after an examination.

Secondary-school grades (for which rank in class is often used as a convenient substitute) have been found to be the best single prediction of undergraduate grades. After a student has entered college or university, his grades from year to year are found to be the best prediction of his ability to continue and go on from level to level.

As regards foreign students, American universities insist that their credentials must show grades. Here a difficulty arises because availability of grades in foreign systems varies from country to country and the grades available may differ greatly from American patterns.

Foreign applicants coming from approved institutions or programmes abroad are selected competitively with students from accredited American institutions. The selective devices and grading system of the country and institution of origin are used to estimate the applicant's standing within his home system, and this estimate is then used to place him in the context of all applicants, from the United States and from abroad, in competition with all of them.

The problem with which the American evaluator is faced is accordingly to find out to what extent foreign grading systems correspond to those of the United States. American evaluators tend to think of the grades reported from abroad in the same way as they think of those they know from American institutions. Where they lack specific information about grading practices in a foreign system, they are likely to assume that the pattern of the latter is similar to that of United States institutions, though this is often not the case.

4. The role of tests. Virtually all United States colleges and universities require an aptitude test, usually the Scholastic Aptitude Test (called SAT) of the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB), and attach nearly as much weight to this test as to the secondary-school record of the applicant. A large number of colleges and universities also require achievement tests in certain subjects, many of them specifying that three of the CEEB achievement tests must be taken. The weight given to achievement tests in determining admissions varies widely.

As regards foreign applicants, American admissions officers readily accept the results of national 'maturity' examinations, and of the British and African School Certificate and General Certificate examinations, as important parts of admission qualifications, and usually tend to attach more weight to such certificates than to the applicant's school record. Few American colleges and universities will accept a foreign applicant unless he can present the certificate of secondary education required for admission to the principal (usually public) universities of his own country. Where such a certificate involves more than twelve years' schooling, the student is often accorded advanced standing, i.e. given credits at the time of entrance in some of the subjects taken in the secondary school.

There are certain inherent difficulties in applying the American-designed tests to foreign applicants. As nearly all the tests use the English language, applicants with another native language are under a handicap, and even native English speakers coming from a non-American environment are handicapped by the specific American culture bias of the tests. Furthermore, most foreign students are unfamiliar with the American type of short-answer testing. This is one reason why American tests have not until recently been much used in the selection of foreign students, and why American universities have in general preferred to rely on the testing provided by the applicant's home system and their own interpretations of the latter.

While national systems of testing at the secondary-school level in many countries have reached a high standard of development, there is less uniformity when it comes to the degree level. American educators at times find it very difficult to assess foreign degrees, and are coming more and more to experiment with the use of American tests for applicants holding foreign degrees. In a few cases (e.g. the Spanish version of the CEEB SAT), tests are in the language of the applicant. In most cases, however, they are in English, although the Educational Testing Service and other agencies are working with forms of tests designed to eliminate, as far as possible, culture bias

and language problems. One example is the special version of the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test which was used for the African Scholarship Program of American Universities.

Examinations are, however, seldom used in the United States as the sole or principal factor determining admission. The weight given to examinations varies, and tends to be inversely related to the accreditation and quality of the foreign university in question, so that an applicant from a little-known institution may be accepted mainly on the strength of his American test, while the latter may play a very subordinate role if he comes from a highly rated institution.

5. Recommendations. The quality and usefulness of recommendations from teachers vary greatly. To the extent that other information is incomplete, the weight given to recommendations increases. Professional contacts among the leading men in all disciplines are on the whole well established within the United States. Where one leading professor recommends a student to another, his advice carries great weight, but a recommendation by a professor who has not distinguished himself in his field will count for little.

If the recipient does not know the writer of the recommendation, he is likely to attach less weight to it, and this is naturally more often the case if the writer is in a foreign university.

At the undergraduate level, most American institutions will not admit a freshman who is not favourably recommended by his secondary school, and such a recommendation is found to correlate well with success in higher study. American evaluators wish they could get information of the same sort from foreign secondary schools.

6. Interviews. Though research on the value of interviews shows that there is little correlation between the interview report and subsequent successful studies, many institutions still require interviews. When the applicant is abroad and the American university has no personnel in the country in question, interviews can often only be undertaken by a third party. A few institutions have experimented with the use of co-operative representation through professional associations for this purpose. The largest project for interviewing non-sponsored applicants in their home countries is that established by the Institute of International Education, which at present arranges interviews in at least twenty-six countries.

There are special arrangements operating in several countries for foreign students who are sponsored by government or philanthropic agencies. These usually include interviews and other types of screening in the home country by bi-national committees, Fulbright commissions, the African-American Institute, etc.

Conditions governing the granting of equivalences

Many professions in the United States have set up specific standards for the kind of education regarded as a prerequisite for the exercise of a particular

profession. The requirements often detail the general and pre-professional study in required specific fields, as well as the required professional studies. They also state the accreditation which must be held by the institutions in which such previous studies have been undertaken. All accredited American institutions conform to these standards. Some foreign countries maintain similar standards, while others provide training of greatly different levels.

If a person holding a foreign professional title comes to the United States as a visitor, or in order to participate in some kind of brief training programme, he is usually accepted into non-degree programmes and shown the courtesies due to his professional rating in his home country. But if he offers himself as a candidate for a degree his previous studies will be scrutinized in order to ascertain whether they are up to United States standards. If they are found to have serious shortcomings, he is usually refused, or asked to make up deficiencies before attempting his degree programme, or asked to submit to qualifying examinations.

At the undergraduate level, holders of certificates of secondary education from countries with well-established systems of pre-university education are usually accepted in the United States if such certificates are recognized for admission to universities in their own countries. Particularly good students coming from particularly good secondary schools are, like their American counterparts, sometimes exempted from certain freshman courses with credit.

For admission to graduate study in United States universities, the bachelor's degree or its equivalent from an accredited institution is a prerequisite. In the case of foreign applicants, the difficulty is that many foreign universities do not give a bachelor's degree or any other qualification closely analogous to the American bachelor's degree. The common American practice is to require the candidate to have taken some degree (or at least some comprehensive examination) needing approximately as many years' university study as the United States bachelor's degree.

Doctoral degrees awarded by United States institutions qualify the holder for professional employment. However, the right to exercise a profession does not come within the purview of the present inquiry. It may, however, be said that holders of foreign doctorates are usually welcomed in American institutions and given facilities for research work. Some institutions offer courses for post-doctoral students and award diplomas in certain specialities at the post-doctoral level.

Ordinarily United States institutions only recognize as a post-doctoral scholar the graduate of a recognized major foreign university whose degree is up to the standard of the degree of doctor of philosophy of major American universities.

It is not the practice of United States universities, nor of United States academic bodies, to conclude bilateral agreements on the subject of equivalences.

The role of government agencies and professional bodies

The United States Government does not operate universities or research institutes (except for the military academies and a few very specialized institutions), nor does it control or direct public or private university institutions at any level. American universities often ask USOE to help them interpret foreign educational documents; but its role in such matters is purely advisory. USOE is particularly well equipped to give such advice; it employs a staff of specialists who carry on research in the field of comparative education, and it publishes monographs on related questions.

An important part in matters connected with the reception of foreign students is played by the Council on Evaluation of Foreign Student Credentials. The council was founded in 1955 on the initiative of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers in order to deal with the problem of faulty placement (e.g. unwise admission or admission at the wrong level or in the wrong speciality). It is composed of representatives of a number of important university and academic associations and includes participation from relevant agencies of the Federal Government.

The council's principal function to date has been to draw up 'placement recommendations', the latter being published as pamphlets in the *World Education* series. These already cover a considerable number of countries. Placement recommendations for more than forty countries and areas in Africa have also been approved (to be published in a book entitled *Education in Africa*). The recommendations of the council are not binding on the member associations, but are found to be very helpful.

Some of the organizations for co-operation among American universities hold periodical 'workshops' to discuss the evaluation of foreign credentials.

The United States institutions of higher education are independent of the central government, especially in matters concerning the equivalence of foreign qualifications. There are no agreements relating to equivalences with other countries or universities. Applications for equivalence are decided on their merits, the basic principle being that foreign applicants should satisfy the same conditions as applicants with American qualifications, and compete with them on an even footing for university places. The fact that they come from another linguistic or cultural environment may, however, sometimes place them under a handicap.

The American evaluator of foreign qualifications tends to assume that foreign school records will reflect basic educational objectives similar to those aimed at by American schools. This makes his task easier, but the assumption contains a factor of error which operates in favour of the foreign applicant.

On the whole, great care is taken to evaluate the content of qualifications, both of American and of foreign applicants, and a comprehensive set of criteria is normally applied to the study of foreign qualifications. These criteria have to some extent been standardized by co-operation between

American universities, through such organizations as the Council on Evaluation of Foreign Student Credentials. In fact, the attachment of the American universities to their autonomy, and its consequent individual variations, is leading them voluntarily to adopt a considerable measure of co-ordination in matters of admission, not very dissimilar to the co-ordinated approach found in some countries where the universities are under the formal control of the central government.

Final comments

The meaning of equivalence

It does sometimes occur that the examination systems of two countries are identical. This is, for example, the case with those of France and some former French territories. But this is extremely rare; in the vast majority of cases the qualifications acquired in one country differ in various ways from those acquired in another. In such cases it is generally found possible to establish equivalence between two qualifications if there is a reasonable measure of similarity between them. This similarity will then have to be assessed by a scrutiny of the foreign qualification and a comparison with the corresponding qualification of the receiving country, undertaken either unilaterally by the receiving country or university, or bilaterally by both the countries in question. The latter method is principally employed in the preparation of bilateral agreements.

In assessing the content of a foreign qualification, one or both of the following methods are usually resorted to: the authority responsible for according equivalences may assess the length of the periods of study undertaken by the applicant or it can make a study of the curriculum and examination requirements of the foreign university in question.

It is usually easier to establish equivalences of qualifications at the school-leaving level than at the university level, because the national requirements in the former case are subject to less variation and are easier to evaluate than university-acquired qualifications.

Methods of establishing equivalences

It would be too optimistic to envisage an answer to the equivalence question that would be acceptable to the great majority of countries, let alone all of them. The problem is bound up with the university systems, and what may be possible for a country with one system may be unsuitable for another. Thus, while it would be relatively easy for a country to establish a system of formal equivalences if its universities were required to adhere to standards centrally established by the State, it would be next to impossible, or at least very difficult, if its universities were completely autonomous.

All that can be done in the present context, therefore, is, firstly, to point out that in all the six countries under review equivalences can be and are

accorded to foreign qualifications, though the methods of evaluation vary from country to country, and, secondly, to discuss the possible approaches to a solution of the problem, and their pros and cons.

The multilateral approach. This lends itself chiefly to groups of countries with related university and general cultural traditions. The advantage of multilateral arrangements is that, if they can be effected, they solve the problem for a number of countries at one blow. Such arrangements, of a limited scope, have been made, e.g. between the Member States of the Council of Europe.

The difficulties of making multilateral arrangements, when it comes down to more detailed provisions, may be illustrated by the efforts of the Scandinavian group—countries that are culturally very closely related—which have been going on for many years, without a final result having yet been attained.

One drawback of the multilateral approach is that it is likely to be difficult to find a common measure of the qualifications acceptable to all the participants, and that the provisions are therefore liable to be watered down to a considerable degree.

Like the unilateral approach, the multilateral approach also has the disadvantage that the authorities in question, e.g. the universities, are likely to be more chary of committing themselves to the recognition of equivalences when these are formalized, and therefore automatically binding on them, than if they remain free to decide individual cases on their merits.

The bilateral approach. Where this method takes the form exemplified by the recent German-French bilateral agreement, under which the equivalence of specific qualifications was assessed by working groups consisting of experts of both participating countries, it has the advantages of making the process of evaluation easier and of minimizing the risk of errors of judgement which may occur where this is done unilaterally.

The bilateral solution normally involves prolonged negotiations and much preparatory work, but this would generally not be an insuperable difficulty: any two countries wishing to conclude a bilateral arrangement can always do so, provided the governments concerned have the power to enter into commitments binding on the universities. Where this is not the case, as for example in the United Kingdom and the United States, effective bilateral agreements between governments will hardly be feasible.

Bilateral arrangements of this type fix equivalences on the basis of the examination systems as they are at the time when the arrangements are signed. But universities are apt to change their curricula and examination requirements from time to time, or to interpret them differently when a new professor is appointed to a chair. Therefore, if the intention is to recognize only qualifications comparable in content to those required from nationals, bilateral arrangements must be subject to periodic review and to revision where necessary.

The unilateral approach. This may take two forms: (a) the competent authorities (e.g. the universities) decide each individual case on its merits; (b) the recognition of equivalences is standardized to the extent that lists are drawn up of foreign qualifications that are deemed acceptable.

The second method has the advantage of facilitating the work of the authorities responsible for granting recognition which are only obliged to scrutinize qualifications that have not been listed as approved. But it has the drawback mentioned above: the authorities granting recognition are likely to be less willing to enter into generalized commitments than to grant recognition in individual cases.

The principal drawback of the first method is that applicants do not know beforehand what their chances are of having their qualifications recognized. Its principal advantage is the elasticity of the system, which permits universities to adapt their practices to the demands of the times. And in view of the increasing interest in international cultural co-operation, and the growing number of students seeking higher education abroad, it may be hoped that such adaptations may in the course of time lead towards an increasing liberalization of practices.

Attention may be drawn to two things in this connexion. The replies indicate that the 'developed' countries find it to their advantage to accept foreign specialists for further training in their institutions of higher education. And this, in fact, is to be welcomed inasmuch as it contributes to the strengthening of cultural bonds between different countries.

Furthermore, the risk of accepting foreign students for further study whose previous training may not be quite up to the standard of the receiving country is perhaps sometimes overestimated, though it is relevant where the receiving university (as for example in the United Kingdom) limits the number of students it admits and its acceptance of an under-qualified candidate may thus involve the refusal of a better-qualified one. However, in such matters, if an accepted candidate finds himself handicapped by insufficient previous training, he is himself the principal sufferer.

The absence of reciprocity where the unilateral approach is adopted may be regarded as a factor of minor importance: the recognition of the qualifications of foreign students is an internal affair, and it is not a matter which necessarily calls for a *quid pro quo*.

Groups of countries may agree to 'harmonize' their examination requirements or to organize them in such a way as to satisfy the minimum requirements of all parties to an agreement. This means tackling the equivalence question at its very root, and would do away with the whole problem within the group.

It is hardly necessary to say that this could only be done in exceptional cases, seeing that examination regulations are usually founded in tradition and adapted to specific national needs.

In this connexion, mention may be made of comparative studies of European curricula undertaken by the Council of Europe Committee for

Higher Education and Research, with a view to establishing criteria to which training in a number of disciplines should conform.

A study on chemistry was completed in 1965 and published in 1966. It is being followed up by similar studies on biology, physics, geography, history and economics. These studies could be useful for groups of countries desiring to harmonize their examination requirements, and could also serve as yardsticks in the assessment of foreign qualifications, and thus facilitate the granting of equivalences.

Perhaps the most outstanding example of a liberal treatment of the equivalence problem is the Council of Europe Convention of 1953 on the Equivalence of Diplomas Leading to Admission to Universities. The council decided not to scrutinize the contents of the diplomas in question, but to trust the universities of Member States to maintain reasonable standards. In other words, the principle: what is good enough for the universities of our fellow members, is good enough for us. This approach is, however, hardly possible in the case of qualifications acquired as the result of university studies, except perhaps between countries with exceptionally strong cultural affinities.